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THE CARDINAL'S PAWN.

CHAPTER VIII.

"You have been beating these marshes a long time till the game rose, good fellow!"

Fiamma stood upright in the gondola, resting a hand on the low black roof of the cabin. The sense of oneness with her part which is the inspiration of successful acting had come to her, curling her lip with a slight insolent smile, not out of character as she purposely emphasised the Florentine accent.

The gondolier, driving his craft forward in its undulating sweep, answered with a respectful gesture. "By the wych-hazel, *messer*, ever since the Vulcans in the Merceria hammered out yester-even from the clock-tower! Beating the marshes it was truly, for it was not known at what point of the lagoons your Excellency would break cover."

At the familiar adjuration Fiamma turned sharply, recognising old Carpaccio by word and gesture. Attired in the tight-fitting garments of a gondolier the astrologer showed a still vigorous figure, but the furtive glance which he sent along the looming sand-shoals recalled his characteristic of normal deprecation. "Best stoop to enter the *felze*, *messer*," he said in a low tone. "We shall soon leave these dead lagoons behind, and there are eyes that never sleep in Venice."

Fiamma still leaned negligently on the cabin-roof. "You've journeyed fast to come so far, my friend," she said lightly; "faster, I dare swear, than any lady's litter."

"A lady's litter can go fast when driven by a woman's will. My mistress was bent on outstripping you, *messer*, for she guessed shrewdly (by the sign that the coat-of-mail was proved workmanship of Milan) that after receiving the latest love-token from the Palazzo Strozzi you would take wing for Venice to witness the grand doings that are like to be, as you once swore to her whom I serve to do in such a case,—to dash them to the ground when at their height by crying in the face of all men: 'There stands wife, harlot, traitress, but no widow!'" The astrologer's voice had sunk to the lowest whisper. "But one who loves your thinnest nail-paring more than her own soul, conjures you not to risk yourself needlessly, *signore*; she swears by the Trinity that the vengeance you seek will fall ripe at your feet without your needing to move a hand. Be warned, *signore*; Venice for you is as a pest-house for a sound man; a thousand chances to one that its breath is death!"

"And what curtain has your mistress for me to lurk behind, while she feasts the eyes of Venice on her puppet-show of vengeance?" Fiamma

asked, breathless with amazement that her brother should have been liable to such flaws of passion as often shook her own mood, that a boundary should have existed somewhere in the complaisance of the adventurer, who to all eyes had taken his separate road with never a resentful glance for that one into which his wife had struck.

"A curtain thick as it needs to be," returned Carpaccio. "Venice, like many another old wife, has her secrets, which those who know her best can wile from her at times. And she whom I serve knows Venice, none better, since the years which brought a lithe light-footed woman to consume her youth over the crucible's glow, and to glean wisdom from the alchemist who found no man of them all like Cassandra, his sister's child, for a daring treading in his steps. But she trod too fast, the scholar with the man's brain under the girl's gold curls; and the price of her quickness was the long years which have chained her to her couch, blasted by the poison from which all her cool wit barely kept her life. Yet she makes her puppets dance for her, as you said but now, *messer*." The astrologer's voice took a subtly satirical intonation. "The past is an old story, like all old stories good for nothing but a way-mark, and known to you as to all men; but what you, and all men, hunger and thirst to know is the future. Madonna Bianca has trusted Cassandra to Venice, since through my reading of the stars my mistress foretells her widowship of a great change to befall her here."

The figure to whom he spoke threw itself with a gasp of excitement on the soft cushions. The sunset had faded from the air that now began to be slightly resonant with the hum of men's business and pleasure, the throb of life beating through the veins of

a town. Low cries drifted across the ripples, the warning notes of the gondolas that flitted past in the dusk, sowing the water with wavering crimson gleams from the lanterns swung on the rowers' poles. Across the water Venice was stealing on them.

"So far, so good, but I have no mind to be trusted by madonna Cassandra yet," Fiamma reflected. "The reckoning called by an angry woman is apt to be heavy; better that she should think me a careless lover for the present."

A jar running through the boat's length roused her to reality; and, as she looked up, she saw that the gondola was caught on the edges of a shoal of others lying to before a palace-front incrusting with coloured marbles. Lights, streaming through the doorways, threw a cloth of gold on the water heaving against the porphyry stairway, and up the stairway pressed a crowd of figures, dotted here and there by masks and dominoes.

Carpaccio was intent on his steering. As his craft lay for an instant along the wet-gleaming stones, his passenger threw the end of her mantle about her face and boldly stepped out on the palace stairs. "Should he even, here and now, turn his head and miss me, he will not cut my throat and his own with his tongue," she guessed shrewdly.

Among the groups ceaselessly swirling through each other, the unbidden guest mingled unnoticed, though with a certain instinct she avoided a lofty presence-chamber which for light and colour might have been the heart of the rainbow. Under the scintillating candelabra the host of the night entertained a few specially favoured guests on a dais hung with purple and green. Fiamma's quick eyes soon perceived a scarcity of ladies in the scene, those present

being apparently matrons of long-standing, their charms scarcely needing the protection of the glittering yellow veils which they arranged incessantly over their bare shoulders.

"The daughters of St. Mark seem to have reached years of discretion," squeaked a mask in her ear, with a laugh that the conventional falsetto could not hinder from sounding startlingly familiar. The black domino told no tales, but a sudden vision of the bare guest-room of the inn at Bologna blotted out the light of the candles from Fiamma's sight, while a strange leap of her pulses choked the speech from her lips.

"The damsels who sun their curls on the balconies are better worth eyeing," the mask went on; "but they are invisible, save at Ascension-tide when they go to see the new fashions set out on the puppet in the Merceria. Will you wait till Ascension to choose a fair lady, or are you suited already?" he added, with an insistence that made Fiamma sure that her silence had been wise. She drifted with the crowd, but the tall mask kept his place. "Perhaps the palace-door will shut out a Venetian beauty into your arms," he continued, the eyes within his mask fixing themselves intently on Fiamma's muffled face. The allusion was obvious to the wind-blown door, which, folks said, had barred the Capelli palace to Bianca's return on the night when she had dared all to snatch an interview with her Florentine lover. Fiamma was sufficiently on her guard to maintain a careless silence as of one wearied by an importunate talker. She turned towards the outer vestibule, taking advantage of the increasing crowd to slip from her companion's side, the multitude of dark figures around rendering pursuit difficult.

"Could I but procure me a gon-

dola it would be easy enough to play hide with him," she thought, moving with those about her into a balcony opening on the water. "That Englishman haunts me like a ghost; I would I might lay him with the charm of the crucifix!"

A shrill cry interrupted her meditations. Framed in the twisted pillars of one of the balcony arches an extraordinary figure stood at bay, a woman dressed in a rose-coloured doublet and puffed hose slashed with silver, a train of darker crimson falling from her shoulders. Fair hair frizzled into two horns above her forehead, added to a supernatural height that bewildered Fiamma till she perceived the woman to be mounted on huge silver chopines, raising her above the heads of the crowd, but rendering her incapable of moving a step without support. Hemmed in by a knot of gondoliers (most of them the worse for wine) she turned her head here and there with the gesture of some hunted animal searching for a way of escape from the gibes and rough caresses of her tormentors.

With a woman's instinctive chivalry Fiamma had shouldered her way to the front, before she reflected that the move might render her dangerously conspicuous. The aspect of a gentleman was sufficient to rout most of the aggressors, the rest lounging away with rude jests, as their victim stretched out imploring hands to the new comer.

"I pray you, *cavaliere*, lend me your shoulder till I reach my gondola. A couple of minutes in the company of Carnation of the Calle will do you no harm, even though you are as good as your face promises; or if, as is more like, you are sinner instead of saint, why then, they won't hurt you either."

The face, white with fear as the

lace ruff about the woman's neck, appealed to Fiamma more than the mocking words. Still the mustering glances of the guests filled her with apprehension, as the strange figure, steadying herself upon her chopines by a grip of Fiamma's shoulder, steered herself and her companion towards the gondolas moored to stakes in the canal. As the pair passed over the mosaic pavements the woman glanced about her resentfully. "Before now the Capelli has thought it worth his while to bid me to a gayer masquerade than this," she said angrily. "How should I know that to-night's was a statelier affair than scores of others, when these noble ladies airing their ropes of pearls in the candlelight made room by their absence for fairer faces, while they moped like caged birds in the dull rooms looking out on the *rio*? No doubt the Capelli wishes to dazzle Venice with his splendour, before bird Bianca,—she who fluttered out for a space from the dove-cote—turns home to have her plumes whitened,—a pretty pigeon of St. Mark's, truly!"

The bitter words went by Fiamma unheeded, her mind piecing the startling fact of her having stumbled on the Capelli palace with that of the Englishman's presence in it. She questioned the possibility of some capacity connecting him with the house, and her heart leaped in her side as she remembered that, in their first meeting among the Apennines, he had spoken of leaving Venice. Absorbed in a suspicion that her track had drawn him back, which his recent almost verbal identification of herself with Pietro Bonaventuri seemed to confirm, Fiamma stood motionless on the marble steps, watching the outlines of Carnation's gondola merge into the darkness, before she roused herself to the conviction that she had rushed into the jaws of a danger

from which it would not be easy to escape.

Already her act of knight-errantry had drawn an ominous attention to her, and as an eddy in the shifting groups showed a mask taller than the others steadily working his way towards her, the girl felt that the passing minute held her last chance of safety. For an instant she stood irresolute. The hour for discarding the masks had struck; some of the soberer guests were already departing. Fiamma saw the one possibility of escape opened to her. An ecclesiastic, presumably of high office, to judge from his embroidered robes, had just passed by; he was about to step into his gondola when Fiamma touched his arm. "Father," she whispered hurriedly, "I have a secret touching a great house in Venice. Would it please you to hear it in confession?"

The priest nodded, adroitly screening by his spreading robes her descent into the gondola. The boat glided into the darkness, Fiamma palpitating over the success of her daring impulse as much as at the new difficulty of escaping from her companion. The cry of the gondolier beat musically through the tangle of her thought, as the craft turned into a side-canal, across which the breath of clematis floated on a freshening wind which told of an open space of water near at hand. Gondolas still flitted past theirs, but a certain terror lest some lonely lagoon encircling a solitary monastery might lie ahead urged her to another desperate expedient.

A boat, with a lady on the side nearest to Fiamma, was for an instant next them, the figures outlined in the starlight. With a reckless laugh Fiamma shot her hand forward, clutching at the woman's veil as though in insolent gallantry. The man beyond sprang up, a flash of light darting from the rapier in his hand; but the

churchman had already given a swift order, and his gondola flew ahead like a sea-swallow, darting from one narrow water-lane into another, till the shouts of the pursuit were dulled by distance.

"What madness has bitten you, young man?" exclaimed the priest in a fierce whisper. "That cavalier whose lady you so wantonly insulted is nephew to one of the Ten; you had better at once have dropped your name into the Lion's Mouth. Even if he does not denounce you, in all likelihood we have not yet shaken off the foes roused by your hot-blooded folly, and by the skin flayed from the blessed Bartolommeo I refuse to be an instant longer in the company of one against whom so much as a dog of the Ten bears a grudge, if your confession concerned Pope Paul himself! You had best take shelter quickly at the Black Hat yonder, where, if you are wary in dropping no hint of the power of the enmity you have aroused, I make no doubt you will be initiated into some hiding-hole framed for mad lads like yourself to escape the consequences of their drinking-bouts."

The gondola slackened as he spoke at a cavernous doorway, pushing off again into the shadow before Fiamma, triumphant over her shrewd guess as to the pacific prudence of churchmen, had fairly sprung on the stone slab of the threshold. The innkeeper proved alert at her first hurried sentences, conducting her to a chamber which communicated with the roof, furnishing at need a way of escape.

Left alone, the girl unlatched the casement that bowed above a narrow street. A red spark of light glimmered in the corner, casting a dim glow over a Virgin with seven swords in her heart. The sight recalled the crazed wanderer in the rice-swamps to the girl's mind; and a shudder

checked her breath as she realised that the past day had brought herself within reach of the terrible silent power, before whom she, by the part she had undertaken to play, was already a sentenced criminal. "Faith, the odds are heavy," she thought, stretching the limbs stiff and bruised by her wanderings; "one girl against all Venice! Heigho, if that Englishman were for me, I should not fear his keen eyes and cool smile as I do now! I think sooner than face them I would pluck the beards of all the Ten." She writhed in the blackness of the canopied bed with a sudden causeless impatience. "The plague catch him! Why am I pitted against him of all men? He will baulk me if he can; the hardness of the eyes within his mask told me as much. I seem to him like a clumsy country lad, and I must continue to seem so if I would not hear a convent-grate fall behind me as dull as earth on a coffin-lid. He must wonder at the Capelli's taste, yet she found Pietro handsome enough to follow him over marsh and mountain,—until she murdered him that she might step on his dead body to a throne." The soft young face, still rosy in its womanly flushings, grew set and stern. "What are a man's blue eyes to me in the scales against a brother's blood? I will revenge dead Pietro in spite of him." Her thoughts grew misty with coming sleep. "Yet I wish they had not cut my hair at the convent, perhaps he would have thought me fairer if he had seen it rippling to my knees—"

CHAPTER IX.

SHE slept long and heavily, waking for the first time in many days to a leisure to think and plan at ease. The effect of her late hardships had not entirely vanished, and she decided

on hiring a gondola by way of gaining a knowledge of the town likely to prove useful to her plans.

Tolerably confident in the certainty that previous to the elopement with the Capelli which had stirred all Venice, Pietro Bonaventuri, the merchant's clerk, had been unlikely to attract the smallest notice, so that her person, except to Cassandra's agents, was probably unknown to any chance passer-by, she sallied forth at last, to drift in an amazement that dulled thought.

Through the shadowed street on which she had looked last night she passed into a sun-steeped square, breaking at the furthest end into a dazzle of blue water and ramparted on its other three sides with marbles dazzling as drifted snows, or mellowed into dusky tints of yellow as though translucent with bygone sunlight. Silken banners, streaming from poles stained with Venetian red, called the eye in an imperious summons to the gilded domes of St. Mark. Beneath the statued horses of the portico, in the shadow of the triple-arched doorway, jugglers tossed golden balls, brown-skinned loungers gambled with quick movements of supple fingers, women, with copper water-vessels hung from the yokes on their shoulders, paused to listen to the *improvisatore* leaning against a pillar with its mosaic peacocks and lions. Further away white colonnades seemed to float on a hazy vista of water, as though the clouds had marshalled themselves in a mirage of kings' palaces.

Keeping her mantle carefully about her face Fiamma passed beneath the sheer height of the Campanile, from which the buildings around fell back as though in homage to its springing stateliness, and stepped with no foreboding shiver through the slender columns where death, the Ten had

decreed, waited for Pietro Bonaventuri should he again set foot in Venice.

Yet the keen glitter was absent from the girl's eyes, as the gondola on which her choice had fallen oared its length along sleeping water-ways, sliding by marble stairs leading up into the shadow of palaces, or beneath balconies where gay-feathered birds rocked on gilded hoops. The winding of the canals which diaped the narrow streets in a green network were impressed on a watchful brain; yet at times, when the sweetness of some patch of flower-garden flung itself over a jealous wall, or a fair face gleamed for an instant through the fretted balustrades of a balcony, an unrest stirred in the young blood at a thought of the blue-eyed Englishman loitering perhaps in some flower-sweet garden-ground, with some flower-fair face beside him. "Mary Mother," she cried, noting the quivering of the slender strong fingers laced on her knee, "why should my heart flutter like a bird's that fears the fowler's grasp? I scarce owe his blue eyes a passing hate, and yet he seems to move beside me, as though he, and not the Capelli, were the one in Venice for me. Ah, I hate that woman with her slow smile and sunny hair! No doubt her white loveliness will fool him, and she will have a stiletto for him too unless I end her plots. But I will end them, if only for the sake of the woman of his country who doubtless waits his coming, a woman pale as a corpse, with fog and not sun in her blood; they are all like that in England, old Marco used to say. *Cio*, the sun beats on this floating blackness like hammer on anvil! I will seek the twilight of yonder church and vow a candle, long and white as the Englishwoman herself, to St. John Baptist if he will help a Florentine."

The gondola had turned into an

alley-like canal on which the side door of a church, frescoed in dim faded colours, opened almost to the water's level. Fiamma signed to the gondola to await her, and pushing the leathern curtain aside, passed into the shadow of the church.

Her first steps revealed a spacious interior apparently undergoing restoration, for a space on the wall opposite was occupied by an artist's scaffold, on which a female figure, in a dress of white linen falling in straight folds to its feet, lay extended, the head pillowed on its arm. At the sight of the sleeping face against its background of fair curling hair, Fiamma recognised at once the woman whom she had befriended the night before in the Capelli palace.

Not caring to be noticed Fiamma knelt down indifferently at an altar in the shadow of a massive column not far from the rough woodwork deserted at present except for the sleeping model. A drowsiness, induced by the coolness spiced with lingering breaths of bygone incense, was stealing over her when she was roused by a voice sounding distinct though far away. "By the gondola, he has entered here! The *poppe* who rows it swears it; slender, dark curls, bright keen eyes as I noted him last night when he insulted my wife. No scandal, things go smoother without it,—cast the cloak over him as he comes out!"

With the acute perceptions of the hunter that instinct, even more than education, had planted in her nature, Fiamma remained on her knees, venturing only by gradual stealthy movements to slide beyond the pillar with the strange acoustic properties either in itself or in the adjoining portion of wall. Assuring herself by furtive glances that the side-chapel, in which she was, screened her from observation, she crouched at last by the model's side, pressing her hand firmly

on her mouth. "Hist!" she breathed, leaning her face almost on the other's. "An enemy waits for me at yonder doorway. By the service I rendered you last night, show me if you can, how I can give him the slip."

The sleepy brown eyes she looked into kindled with intelligence. "If you can cross the pavement to that image of the Madonna, you are safe," whispered the woman hurriedly. "Twist the third blossom from the top of the lily-bud in her hand, and then follow the stairway fearlessly; the third is key to the whole." She paused, frowning in an effort of thought. "Aha, I'll screen your passage; go quickly and trust Carnation!"

She stepped off the platform, giving Fiamma an imperative thrust towards a life-size image of the Virgin which stood against a fluted column at some distance. Fiamma was about to trust all to a desperate dash when, with a shrill scream, Carnation rushed forward, pointing as she ran to the farthest entrance. "Thieves, thieves!" she cried. "He has stolen the colours from the master's store and a kiss from me! Quick! He cannot have gained the *campo* yet."

At her cry a couple of men appeared at the door giving on the canal, and dashed at right angles to her towards the main entrance. Carnation in her rush adroitly fouled one of them, the two rolling ignominiously on the threshold.

Like a lapwing Fiamma had flown across the pavement in the confusion created by the model's stratagem. She wrenched the ivory lily-bud in the Virgin's hand, and at the clutch the blue robe of the figure opened aside from the waist downwards, disclosing a spiral staircase in the interior. The panel closed behind her, leaving Fiamma on the brink of a chasm of inky blackness.

Voices within the church penetrated to her ear, spurring her to stretch out a foot to the stair below. Once started, the descent lost its terrors, though it led through a blackness that might be felt, at times the wash of water coming to the girl's watchful ears with a dark suggestion of a sliding canal without. A narrow passage suddenly superseded the stairs, and the way now tended upwards. Fiamma hurried on, leaving the lapping water behind her, till her groping hands came smartly in contact with a blank wall barring further progress. A gasp of anger burst from her, as she stood helpless in the musty air of the blind alley. As her fingers felt the outlines of the stones she dragged her hands inch by inch over the masonry in painful examination, hoping that some crack might tell of a door artfully concealed. The smooth brown skin was torn and bleeding from the harsh stone-work when at last she cast herself down, panting and sullen as a wild beast in a trap, likely to be as dangerous in a last stand for life.

The void eternity of the darkness seemed to annihilate time. Fiamma could not tell how long she had sat crouched together, the hand at her breast grasping the charm by which she would foil her enemies' malice, when with electric suddenness a ray of light fell about her. She was on her feet in an instant with a lift of poised muscles, the blade of the crucifix in her hand, only to perceive, outlined against the dusty sunshine, the face of the woman whom in her purgatory of waiting she had cursed between her teeth for tricking her into the snare.

"My bird is fairly caged," the model called down through the opened trapdoor. "Come, sir, borrow a trick from my popinjay and climb up the

wall of your cage to your mistress. Nay," as Fiamma maintained silence, "Carnation means well by you, and if you possessed even the wit of a popinjay, you might by now have been free to flutter where you will. Did I not tell you the threes were key to the whole, and you did but twist the third lily-bud and thought no more of my words? Truly I don't wonder that she of Sheba came from afar to see the wisdom of a man; the sight would be worth a journey."

Fiamma's level brows knitted in bewilderment.

"Press on the third stone on the middle of the wall," Carnation went on, checking her mocking laugh. "Not as if you were touching a lute, my hero; lend your strong wrist to it. There, it moves; put the toe of your dainty shoe in the space it discloses, and spring, as more than once I have had to do on a stirrup, that the cavalier riding to the tournament might take good-luck from my lips."

Fiamma had already obeyed, feeling with anxious hand for the third stone from her foot. Carnation laughed provokingly. "The lady who waits you o' nights on her balcony will have time to grow old before you climb up to her, my son! Lift yourself by your hands; so, that's well,—help yourself with your knee,—"

"I faint, I fall!" Fiamma gasped. The strained muscles of her side, wrenched again by the wide distances between the stones revolving on secret pivots, spoke to her with sharp pain. For an instant longer her clutching fingers maintained her painfully in position; then, as the woman above flung herself flat, catching with a strong grasp at the hands almost wavering out of reach, with a last brave stretch she responded to the aid, and succeeded in bracing her knee on the sill of the trap.

Unable to speak or move for deadly faintness, she felt as in a dream Carnation's movements, as with an effort the model dragged the limp body into the chamber and closed the trap-door. As the Venetian's eyes rested approvingly on the slim young figure, with the pale face framed in its clustering curls, Fiamma felt the warmth of the full red lips pressed to hers in a sudden kiss of womanly pity.

Carnation knelt down by her, rubbing her temples with essences, in a moment fumbling at the fastenings of the doublet. In a frenzy of resistance the girl tried to summon her heavy limbs to their obedience, but the swoon on her crept upwards to its flood. The tinkle of the silver essence-flask falling to the ground came distinctly to her ears, as suddenly the other woman leaped back to the opposite wall, staring thence with wide amazed eyes at the prostrate figure.

A great terror beat in upon Fiamma, drifting her further out on a misty sea; but when Carnation moved again it was not to summon servants to remove the woman whose masquerade had won its way into her dwelling. Gently she covered the brown graceful neck, and with an effort that tasked the entire woman, lifted the unconscious girl upon the canopied bed near, drawing a coverlet stiff with tarnished gold tenderly over her.

The swooning stupor held its captive through the hours of the summer afternoon, but Carnation kept patient ward, lying negligently across a couch drawn underneath the window with a square of painted glass in the centre of its thick greenish quarrells. With the lengthening shadows the chiming of bells made themselves heard, as though the hours of the long day were some silent-footed flock wandering homewards at the bidding of their shepherdess Night. The swing of

the bells seemed to send a cooler air stealing over the water, refreshing Fiamma as her senses came back to her once more. She sat up, sweeping the locks from her forehead with a brown hand. "You hold my secret," she said faintly, but with her boyish directness.

"I have held weightier handfuls in my time," the model retorted, without stirring from her careless attitude. "Truly you play your part well, sweet one, and it's a feather in your cap to have cheated Carnation of the Calle. But what has brought this pretty ship sailing under false colours into Venetian waters? As we in the lagoon challenge strange vessels, 'What do you bring for St. Mark?' A cargo of love with a rosy Cupid speeding a dart after the handsome gallant who has kissed and ridden away, I wager my silver-gilt chopines!"

"Then lose your chopines," Fiamma made answer shortly. The clever eyes of the elder woman questioned her face. "There is another tune which we women dance to," she said in a lower tone. "Maybe the handsome gallant will find that she whom he has kissed and cast, has a last gift for him. Women hate best where they have loved best. Trust Carnation; does the pretty ship come with death under its sails?"

"My business is with a woman," Fiamma said slowly, driven to speech by the necessity of conciliating one who already knew so much. "By carrying my masquerade too far last night I have won the enmity of one of the houses of the Ten."

"That was worse luck than if you had handled a quail on a Friday," commented the Venetian parenthetically.

"And but for you I should have been in my death-room sealed by the water of the canal, and with slimy eels for my hosts." Fiamma ended

with a shudder. She rose impulsively, though weakly enough still, to bend over and kiss her cheek.

Carnation pushed her back. "Bring your kisses to another market, my blessed virgin!" she said with a short laugh. "In her time Carnation of the Calle was fair enough for half the palaces from the Delle Salute to the Rialto to show their teeth to the other half, to win a smile from her, but not one of the dainty ladies,—whose husbands would not trust them abroad without ell-long chopines clogging their heels, that they may not walk a step without the spying of the old hags on whose heads they must lean their hands when they would totter to mass round the corner—not one of them all, I say, would let so much as the shadow of their gondolas fall on mine. If I served you this morning it was but the small change for what your knighthood did for me last night, and so, *basta*, with your secret for a love-token!"

Fiamma stood uncertain. "I do not think with those ladies who keep one measure for their own sins and another for their neighbours," she said. "You have shown yourself kind to me when one such Venetian lady has injured me and mine past all praying for."

The model rose quickly from her lounging attitude. "Why, here's a pearl!" she cried. "A woman who does not try to whiten herself by blackening another!" She caught Fiamma in a strait passionate embrace. "Nay, ladybird, you have won Carnation for your servant, and perhaps her wit may be as keen as the Ten's arm is strong and long, and the pearl as safe in this house as in any oyster-shell of the Adriatic." She signed to the casement at their backs. "This window faces a deserted palace across the *rio*, but there are few in Venice who care to neigh-

bour with me. Twenty years back one, who has long paid his fare in the death-gondola, won on me by the coinage of honey-sweet words and ways to roost in this old house, and contrived that it should be marked without with the red signs that warn of a dwelling infected with the plague, and therefore left to owls and spiders. A sword to guard the Paradise, he said." She laughed harshly, but the laugh hid a sigh. "Paradise has long since turned to Purgatory, but I dwell here, well-pleased that few in Venice know where Carnation houses."

The girl, standing within the circle of her arm, did not answer. Through the open window a gleam from a lamp in the palace, which Carnation had spoken of as deserted, shone like a lambent ruby through the dusk; the moon struck the edges of a great silver mirror, hanging from the window behind which the lamp burned, in such a manner as to reflect the stars powdering the blue night. Gazing down into the mirror with eyes that seemed eager to tear a secret from its heart a woman leaned on a white bare arm, and, as the moon rose higher, the face of Cassandra the Florentine showed wan on the night.

CHAPTER X.

At the vision towards which the crowding events of the last four and twenty hours had led her, Fiamma started back from the window. Carnation, whose eyes had been curiously fastened on the new tenant of the palace, turned at the abrupt movement. "What charm does the mirror hold?" she asked in her usual mocking tone. "Is it to study her fair face,—even I, woman, and at the first glance, must say it's fair in spite of its paleness—that she leans over it, or is it to tell by the stars how soon the path of the

lover who has crossed hers once will turn towards her again?" Her full glance challenged Fiamma. "Is that she with whom you have business, my little puppy, for by that start of yours, this has not been your first glimpse of her?"

"My business with her lies in keeping out of her sight," Fiamma whispered hastily. "Hush, for sound carries well across the water, and the spice which yon golden-haired stargazer could throw into my broth would spoil the boiling."

Carnation shook her head slowly from side to side. "Well, well, secrets are as plenty with you as eggs on Shrove-Tuesday. I will meddle by no finger with the flax on your distaff; perhaps some day will put the right end into my hand without getting me into the tangle that's like to be the web you'll spin." Her huff evaporated in a careless laugh. "Nay, little one, never look pale on my prophecies; small harm will come to you in this world if you'll but take advice warranted to keep you safe from the two mortals who can hurt you the most surely."

"And their names, and your advice?" questioned Fiamma, with a deepening of her long dimple.

"The woman who hates you and the man whom you love," Carnation returned tersely. She leaned her full pliant figure forward, in caricature of some fortune-telling crone, raising her forefinger with an affectation of mystery. "And the spell by which you'll go unscathed for all of them is, if you have the ill-luck to have a heart by you, that you put it up for sale in the Broglio, our street of bargains. But if no one will bid you an empty snail-shell for it,—and it's like they won't, for hearts go cheap enough for the asking—row out beyond the Lido, and drop it into the deepest part of the sea. 'Twill be

safe there, among the golden rings with which our Doges wed the Adriatic and the bones of dead men whom the fair bride has chilled in her embrace." She straightened herself with a whimsical smile, and turned to latch the casement, starting back however in her turn with a gesture of disgust. "*Jesu Maria!* what spawn of the pit does that woman keep beside her?"

Standing well back within the darkening room, Fiamma peered over her shoulder. As the pair looked the silver mirror was withdrawn into the opposite chamber, the moonlight revealing the hairy arms and muscular hands of its remover, before a flash of white eyeballs set in a shrivelled brown countenance reminded Fiamma of the uncanny being she had caught a glimpse of in the shadow of the Florentine gateway.

"Tis Piccolo, her dwarf," she whispered, drawing her companion further back into the friendly dusk. "In his three feet of shrivelled manhood lies the strength which his mistress has lost from the dead limbs that fetter her to that ebony couch, and the cunning that lurks under her golden hair is the spring of his doings. I have been warned of him, and I own that I have less fear of two men such as struck on my trail to-day in yonder church than of a thing like that."

The model shuddered suddenly in the evening chill. "His looks are warning enough," she said, breaking a moment's silence. "Were I the wise woman I played but now, I should believe that a whisper in my blood tells me that such a shrunken mannikin will be the rock on which my boat, that has beaten up and down stormy seas, will be rent and shattered. Well, the boat has sailed, and the morning sunshine in which it set forth has long since faded—"

The sentence was finished in a slow sigh, and the women stood silent, each busy with the problem which Fate had set for each upon life's slate. Carnation was the first to rouse herself, fastening and curtaining the window through which the red lamp-light could no more be seen.

"Madonna has gone to her supper before it gets as cold as the stars," she said, kindling a lamp swinging from chains of fine brasswork from the ceiling. "Who she is and how she came to dispute their lodging with bats and spiders, is a question which, it seems, I must ask of you, my *cavaliere*, for I have never seen man or mouse in the old palace till this hour; but our teeth before our tongues! Wait for me; I must play cook and sewer, scullion and housewife, like the jugglers in the Piazza who keep five golden balls a-dance in the air at once."

The sweep of her white draperies vanished through a doorway as she spoke, and Fiamma employed her solitude in an inspection of her new quarters. The room, tolerably large, was comfortless as a cell, the gauntness of the fourpost bed hidden by no hangings, the graceful lines of an ivory-inlaid couch only relieved by some cushions of faded purple. One corner alone, occupied by a huge alabaster shell supported on the head and shoulders of a tarnished kneeling angel, was as oddly discordant with the rest of the chamber, as the shell's present function of washing-basin was with its evident ecclesiastical character as receptacle for holy water in some lapsed church.

Still weak from her long swoon, the girl sank upon the couch, abandoning herself to the languors of coming sleep with a confidence strange to the self-reliant nature, too weary to analyse the instinct of trust placed in a stranger's faith. In the

silent room the tall Englishman seemed to stand before her, the careless laugh in his blue eyes softening into a smile, before which the colour drew rosily into the sleeping girl's face. His breath came warm upon her cheek as he bent lower, till caressing lingering lips brushed her forehead in a kiss. The keen sweetness of the dream stirred through Fiamma's sleep; she started with outstretched fluttering hands towards the figure that gave back at her movement.

Carnation, standing over her, laughed. "La, la, the right one borrowed my mouth for the chance in your dream!" she said. "Never blush, or rather keep your roses till the market morning when such wares are sold for kisses in the *campo* of Love. Come, let us eat four grains of rice, and then to bed,—for such another dream," she added, drawing the girl forward to the table where platters of minestra (soup thickened with rice and vegetables), minnows and fried cakes were set out with a certain daintiness of arrangement. "You think the plenishing of my chamber something scanty," she continued, as she motioned her guest to one of the two claw-footed chairs. "Once it was a fit casket for the jewel it held; but since those days its treasures have one by one been offered up at the shrine of the Holy Hill, with the *palle* of the Medici for its shield."

The child of the mountain village, ignorant of the existence of Monti di Pietà, cast a glance askance at her companion.

"Ah, you thought like the rest of the world!" cried the other, with the bitterness of one confronted by an old unjust suspicion. "Gold and Carnation,—you put them together in the scales of your thought, and of course the woman would sink. But

you are wrong, my sheep in wolf's clothing! Any dauber of paints on a palette in Venice can for a gold piece buy the face that once won Paradise for itself, and no noble, with his eight cloaks for the seasons and the *festas*, can buy more. It's true that the plumage you saw me in last night is that of the night-birds, but you should best know that the feathers do not always make the bird. No other garments in Venice give freedom to a woman to come and go, to sit in a gondola loosed from the painted stake of some great house, or to gather the men who make the time in her chamber. All things have their price, and if Carnation of the Calle could, in days gone by, hold men's hearts and secrets in her hand without robbing one who had called her his, yet the price of such power is the being flouted by such as you saved me from last night, in being called *sister* by women who have slipped off the narrow causeway which runs above the world's slime, in being whispered *pestilence* at by women who, keeping the causeway, would fain jostle others from it. Yet 'tis the price, and those who think to make Carnation pay but a *grosso* beyond find their mistake. And the power was worth it while it lasted, though now 'tis fading, like the face that was once the fairest in Venice."

She broke off with a sob which closed a subject never again revived between them. In later times Fiamma was glad to remember that she had laid her hand caressingly on the cheek of the woman who, in a misery of desolation, had snatched recklessly at the reins of secret intrigue, careless that the wheels which she aspired to drive should spatter her good name with slander. Now, the gesture, inspired by that sympathy which in its strongest current is apt to sweep

speech away, was nevertheless executed with the awkwardness of the young creature startled by the stirrings of the soul moving to life within itself.

"You will not try these snails stewed in chicken's blood?" asked Carnation after some minutes' pause. "Perhaps none but Venetian palates can find sauce for them, and the odour of Signor Tiziano's paints hangs cloyingly in my nostrils, so that I cannot savour them to-night. I shall be glad when that St. Barbara of his is finished; the master Benvenuto Cellini was better company to sit to, though I lacked the wit to see how so ardent a fingerer of his beads could be so glib with his dagger. Come, pretty one, if you will eat no more, lay yourself to rest in yonder bed; I am neighbour with you in my chamber."

But though Fiamma obeyed her readily, she slept but little; and the pain in her strained side added to her sense of weariness as on the next day she rose, pale-cheeked and heavy-eyed, to begin the unseen vigil on Cassandra's windows that she guessed would, sooner or later, afford some indication of the Capelli's advent in Venice; a slender chance which, however, in her present plight seemed to promise the only opportunity for her mission. The better to hide their secret Carnation continued as usual to spend her days abroad, and the long hours of loneliness, in their maddening monotony, wore the Florentine's stock of patience threadbare.

CHAPTER XI.

SOME days had passed thus, when one afternoon the rapid splashing of an oar from the canal without throbbed through the drowsiness of the watcher crouched beneath the window. Fiamma stealthily raised herself to obtain a view of the occupants.

Beneath the doorway of Cassandra's lodging the gondola pulled up with the suddenness peculiar to Venetian rowers, the jar of its pause seeming to send the torrent of the spectator's blood over cheek and brow and chin, staining even the round young throat with angry crimson. For there, her fair beauty enhanced by the straight lines of the long black silk cloak that formed the everyday dress of Venetian ladies abroad, stood Bianca Capelli, her scarlet lips pouting into a smile as she surrendered her dimpled hand for support to Mark Talbot, the careless laugh for once absent from his eyes.

Trembling under the leap of her pulses, Fiamma leaned against the casement, her breath coming hard through the storm of anger that swept down upon her, as a flaw of wind lashes a mountain lake into sudden foam. The pair landed from the gondola and passed from her sight. Impatient of the curtains that shortened her view by the tenth of a second, the girl pushed it aside,—to meet a gaze of sudden exultancy and wild beseeching love flashed on herself by the paralysed Cassandra.

At the same instant Fiamma dropped the curtain, lulling her but half-stirring alarm with the assurance that the momentary glimpse which was all that Cassandra could have had, was not sufficient to settle any question of identity. The encounter of eyes was indeed immediately blotted from her mind by the anger that continued to shake her in every fibre, as, with the stern patience of some forest creature waiting on its prey, she crouched afresh beneath the window, with eyes and ears only for the moment in which Bianca should emerge again into the sunlight with Talbot.

More than an hour had passed and the girl's limbs were stiffening in

their cramped position, when the light laughter which Fiamma had heard in the gardens of the Oricellari broke again on her ear. With the evening sunlight setting an aureole on her golden hair, the Capelli came forward, her languishing eyes reflecting the smile with which she was whispering to Talbot, though the usual careless trait was in the glance that the Englishman turned on the fair face inclined temptingly towards him.

Bianca had been handed to her place on the cushions before she turned with a sudden recollection towards the second couple standing on the steps of the house. "Good Master Carpaccio," she said, "come not till the stars begin to shine. Should the beryl fail, though madonna vows that it will not, perhaps it will be given you to spell out from the glittering scroll above when I shall be made known to the world as the daughter of St. Mark."

The tall figure of the old astrologer bent assentingly, though with a quick gesture of silence, as he handed an elderly waiting-woman to the place opposite her mistress. The space beside the Capelli was reserved for Talbot, and Fiamma set her white teeth hard, noticing, as the boat shot forward, the alluringly careless movement with which the woman let her hand fall on the brown well-shaped fingers lying on her companion's knee. "Daughter of St. Mark! Daughter of Judas rather!" she muttered, stumbling to her feet. "Perhaps by now she has made that blue-eyed squire of hers into a father-confessor; so fair a penitent will be believed though she counted a sin for every bead of her rosary. The worse the woman, the more cleverly she can blind the men, as though the rank breath of a rotten soul were a mist to dim the keenest eyes."

She seated herself on the edge of the bed, the angry flush dying from

her face as she stared unseeingly in front of her. Gradually her head took its old confident poise, and the fine nostrils dilated under the pressure of some exciting thought. When a gleam of lamplight fell at last through the opening door, the girl rose to confront Carnation with a vigour of resolution in every line of her face.

"Has Carnation of the Calle charm enough to draw a gondolier from his boat and his passenger?" she demanded gaily.

The model shrugged her shoulders. "Scarce as much charm as lurks in a flask of red wine after the vintage," she answered, with deft hands beginning to lay the table for supper. "What plan is hatching under those brown curls of yours, my knight? Have you seen a fair damsel whom you would fain relieve her family from the care of for a week or so?" she added in her reckless way.

"Nay, my fair damsel is a grey-beard whose gondola I would fain row for him," Fiamma returned. "A gondola will wait at sunset under this window, and could you but tempt the rower from his post, I will stand ready to replace him."

Carnation patted her cheek rallying. "You were surely born on the Day of the Innocents, my chicken! How would you, who have scarce snuffed the saltness of the lagoons for a week, handle a gondolier's pole without drawing on yourself half a dozen quarrels from your brotherhood of the *poppà*, whose warning hails have gone by you disregarded and whose keel-water you have taken!" she exclaimed laughingly.

The daring fell from Fiamma's face, but the resolution underlying it did not weaken. "I forgot to look at my standing-ground in my haste to take the leap," she said frankly, beginning to pace up and down the room. "Yet I must not miss the

opportunity that a chance has given, though I set my life upon the stake."

"My wits have no fancy to play blindman's buff," Carnation responded somewhat shortly. "If you cannot trust me to peep into your mysteries, you had best not lean on my advice."

Fiamma stopped in front of her, laying both hands on hers. "I have trusted you with my life," she said warmly, "and it was more for your sake than aught else that I have kept back the nature of my errand in Venice. Yet to one who has already baulked the Ten for me—"

The day died slowly in the dusty room as the women whispered, the younger face growing ever sterner and more resolved, the elder expressing ever more sympathy and amazement. As the girl who was daring all Venice rose to her feet, Carnation rose also, with the look of one who had enlisted the strength that was in her to lessen the odds, if the thing might be, on the weaker side.

"She meted out death, and to a husband, without a moment's shrift," Fiamma concluded. "I will but bind white hands to which the stain of blood is a jest, and the strands of my rope must be haste and secrecy. If I cannot,—and I cannot—play the gondolier, what plan can you frame to carry me unobserved into the palace?"

"One simple as a first confession," returned Carnation promptly. "The fair lady who is to be whited by a miracle of St. Mark will hardly let it be set abroad in Venice that she has dealings with aught that smells of magic; master Star-gazer is a ware that needs deft smuggling. 'Twill be the easier to bid him seek his pretty patron on foot, instead of taking boat for her." She paused reflectively. "Come, you shall stand on a *poppà* after all!" she cried.

"Had we time, I would send for one who has acted the part of gondolier in many a mystery-play of mine, but it's drawing on to sunset already. If we die to-day we shall pass easier through Purgatory than if we lived till to-morrow!" She muffled her white garments under a black cloak, and twisted a gay scarf round Fiamma's waist. "There, you're a proper young steersman for a lady!" she laughed. "Now take your stand, so, when you step on a gondolier's deck, throwing your weight forward on your pole as though about to row a good stroke."

With a hasty glance at the empty windows opposite, Fiamma obeyed her beckoning gesture, following with light feet down stairs and through passages that since her coming she had neither had the physical nor mental vigour to explore. More than once indeed Carnation stopped before seemingly blank pavements or solid panels, till a touch on secret springs laid bare cunningly hidden openings, which sometimes closed so noiselessly behind them that Fiamma, looking back, was at a loss to imagine their existence. Somewhere on a ground-floor her companion stood still at last, signing for her help in sliding back the heavy bolts of a door set into the wall.

Under the women's hands the bars creaked into motion, admitting a radiance of hazy sunlight through the door opening upon a narrow water-way, across which a flight of steps led diagonally up into a labyrinth of alleys overhung by crumbling walls. Within the doorway, beached in a niche in the wall apparently destined for the purpose, lay a gondola on which Carnation was already laying impatient hands.

"I did not know there was a landing-place so near," said Fiamma, stooping to second Carnation's efforts

to launch the boat over the threshold into the canal.

"Near and far enough," returned the other, panting a little under her strenuous attempts. "More than one house and covered gallery lies between you and the roof under which you've slept these nights past. Such paths are by no means rare in old buildings like this nest of warehouses on the water-side, and I will swear that whoever borrowed the tricks of a spider's web in planning them, thought as much of a secret way for pretty feet to enter as for smuggled bales of merchandise. But trade has languished in Venice since the Portuguese have held the highways of the seas to the Indies, and these warehouses, like many another, have been left to crumble on their piles. The Jew, from whom one bought the house that's your ark of refuge, my dove, revealed its secrets, some of them devised in a dead past, he said, by a prior of the church into which your luck led you the other morning." She interrupted herself with a petulant movement. "I chatter worse than the apes tethered for sale on the ledges of the Rialto," she exclaimed, again bending over the gondola. With a soft splash it slipped into the water, Carnation bringing it alongside the threshold by a dexterous snatch at the silk rope fastened to the brass sea-horses at each side of the boat. "Quick, step on to the deck behind the *felze*, and when he you want comes by,—come he must to gain the main channels—drop your pole into the water that I may know him for the right bird to lime," she said, glancing at the mists beginning to float like beeswings on the rosy evening air.

Upon Fiamma's ear, as she obeyed, the swish of an oar plying down stream came faint but distinctly. Another moment brought the sound

to Carnation; with the satisfied nod of one whose calculations have harboured no hitch in them, she swung the gondola with the prow pointing for the landing-stairs, stepping in herself with a deft kick that sent it across the narrow stream. The warning cry of an approaching boat rang out through the sunset, as Carnation threw herself half over the side of her craft, dragging it up to the steps by grasping an iron ring in the stonework.

"Next time I'll borrow the puppet from the Merceria to pair with my young gondolier," she whispered mischievously, leaning back in her seat as quietly as the gondola lay on the sluggish water.

Half dazzled by the flood of rosy light that filled the sky, Fiamma stood, gazing up-stream through her lashes at the boat which had skimmed round the corner of the canal. The black cabin hid the passenger from her till, in the moment in which the boats lay alongside, the outlines of Carpaccio's gaunt figure became visible, and quick as thought she dropped her pole into the water, turning her back squarely on the new arrival as she stooped to recover it. With a good-natured laugh the other gondolier used his pole as a boathook, while Carnation leaned boldly towards the astrologer.

"She who keeps the eyes of Venice busy in these days fears the tongues," she whispered. "A gondola with you for freight had best not be seen on the water flowing by the door that once shut out another secret on the world. By the token of the beryl, *on foot!*"

She pointed imperatively up the alleys already black in shadow, and threw herself back, shrouding her face in her cloak. Carpaccio bent forward, endeavouring to scrutinise the person of the mysterious messenger

but the attempt failed. The women waited in breathless tension as, after a gesture of pause to the rower, he still evidently hesitated, then, glancing at the stars beginning to show through the evening dusk, he signed again, his gondolier accidentally sending the other boat into midstream as he worked his craft up to the steps.

Carnation moved restlessly on her cushions. Already their boat was drifting towards the wider canal below, where the woman's dexterity of push and swing, which had served in this mere water-line, would avail for nothing. Carpaccio had landed and was mounting the steps, preparing to shape his course by the stars at which he still gazed thoughtfully. His gondolier, busy over the moorings of the boat, raised his head at an ejaculation, in time to see Fiamma's once-recovered pole floated now out of reach.

"*Cio!* art poling your boat with an eel, brother?" he cried good-humouredly. "I'll pull your lady in," he added, laying a muscular hand on the gondola.

Carnation tossed him some coins, bursting at the same time into shrill scolding, effectually covering the silence which seemed to Fiamma wise in face of her total ignorance of the brotherhood's lingo. With masculine cowardice under a feminine tongue Carpaccio's rower made haste to secure his craft, and strolled up the alley. The bent figure of the tall old man could still be seen faintly through the gloom ahead.

"Quickly after him, and remember I await you at the stairs of the Madonna of the Swords," whispered Carnation, wrapping the girl in a dark mantle. The words stirred some germ of memory in Fiamma's brain, but her thought did not brood over it to warm it into life. The zest of the hunter tingled in her as, keeping in the shadow of

the high houses, she slipped forward on the astrologer's track, concentrated, as her habit was, on the immediate present. On went the two, the tracker now and then swerving aside from the tongues of flame darting into the night from the doorway of some metal worker's shop, within which bronze figures moved about the furnaces or twisted lengths of glowing iron with great pincers. Smells of frying fish and the strong savours of garlic and leeks hung on the evening air, and the rough scent of wine rushed out through the open wooden shutters behind which sturdy gondoliers watched their portion of cooking with a anticipatory relish, while the cadences of some story-teller droned through the rattle of dice or the grunts of the *moro*-players. Deep-bosomed, heavy-lidded women lounged on the door-steps, soaking a companion's long hair in milk, preparatory to weaving it into plaits, or again teasing with sly touches some handsome fellow sleeping on their knees, the morning's carnation or dahlia still drooping on the crisp black curls behind his ear. The daily revolution of a world had brought the lower strata of humanity in their turn uppermost; but these denizens of a city where a man's safety was best secured by sealing ears, eyes, and tongues took no apparent heed of the figures thrown at intervals out against the velvety blackness of a Venetian night by the glimmer of tapers burning beneath the little shrines fastened at almost every corner.

The walk was long. Once and again Fiamma, crouching in some deep-moulded doorway, or on steps leading to some wine-cellar, watched Carpaccio doubling back upon the way already taken, his simply-subtle face showing at such times the bewilderment of an habitually absent

man accustomed to walk blinded by the mists of his thought through daily life.

The starlight was striking like lance points upon the dark water when the old man, in a species of exhausted patience, finally came to a stand. It was the moment for which Fiamma had waited through the last half-hour; she daringly stepped to his side and touched his elbow. "How soon did you miss the passenger from your gondola the other evening?" she asked coolly. "With your help to-night I shall not fail, as I failed then, to snatch five minutes' secret speech with the woman awaiting you. Help me to this, and I warrant that she whom you serve will forgive you the basket which you brought home that night, empty of the goods that should have been smuggled in from the marshes."

The unexpected voice seemed to penetrate but slowly to the astrologer's brain. "By the wych-hazel, Old Carpaccio will for once speak naked truth, instead of the juggleries for which he's hired to be the mouth-piece!" he said then earnestly. "If you continue to go and come thus like a wandering star, it were more merciful to fashion you a waxen image of my mistress and set it to peak and pine before a fire fed with dead men's bones, rather than to consume the living woman's soul in the furnace of love fed with dead hopes. Since Cassandra caught sight of you at yon window to-day, she has writhed like a spirit in torment on the couch that's a coffin to her, biting her long tresses that she may stifle the moaning of your name,—a moaning that, as the sailor-men of the lagoons would say, is like to foretell storm." He swayed his head slowly from side to side, bending over Fiamma with furtive abruptness. "Look you, Excellency, by long obedience to the

will of her I serve a fear has grown on me till I would sooner cross the crater of Vesuvius than her pleasure; but I am an old man, and the sins of another, which I have lifted no finger to hinder, have come to gnaw corrodingly into my own soul. If you do not wish the fair-haired woman whose lodging you share to pay for your passing fancy with her heart's blood, you will leave her with short farewells."

The stirrings of pity for the maimed creature, on whom she had indirectly and unconsciously brought misery, with which Fiamma had hitherto listened, were changed by the last words into an angry fear. "Tell your mistress that if the butterfly is driven from one blossom it will but settle on another," she retorted arrogantly. "If but the hem of my pretty Venetian's *cappa* is ruffled, madonna Cassandra may make sure of having seen me for the last time."

The insolent masterfulness of the tone failed to divert Carpaccio from his mood of warning. He came a step nearer, laying his slender old hand on the other's shoulder. "Give the old man an alms of patience, *messer*," he pleaded. "Since Cassandra found that, but for an anxious woman's gift of a coat of mail, your dead body would have been carried in good truth out of the Oricellari gardens,—instead of Florence being tricked by blood-stained grasses, an empty coffin, and the Capelli's mourning weeds—she has sworn by the soul of her bargain-coin that she will no longer set her heart in the scale to be overthrown by the breath of such a one as the woman whom she has fooled long enough." The hand on Fiamma's wrist grew strangely chill. "By Bianca's reading of the beryl to-night she will learn that which will leave the path clear between Cassandra and yourself; but if at the eleventh hour

you are false to the vows which you have told a glib score of times on love's rosary, I bid you, *look to yourself!*"

He threw out his ten fingers with an odd menacing gesture, once, twice, and thrice, turning on his heel with an abruptness that contrasted ludicrously enough with his sudden bewilderment at the recollection of having lost his way.

"Old stories tell that the prating of geese saved Rome from a danger, and so you would fain have it with me," Fiamma returned mockingly. "But if the geese had but dreamed of a danger, and thereupon wearied the ears of those about them with their clacking, they had been like to find their necks wrung by some impatient hand. Prate no more, good Carpaccio, but let us seek the house which we must enter to-night."

Her senses, trained through a lifetime by the slight indications of hill and woodland paths, had already, through the narrowing lines of various side-alleys, recognised the broad waters which blocked the vistas for the great canal up which Carpaccio himself had steered her on the night of her entrance into Venice. The astrologer accommodated his steps to her rapid movements, as, casting a keen look or two around, she plunged confidently down a street. Her guess was unexpectedly successful. From the further end of the street, against which the furrows ploughed by passing keels lapped slowly, a narrower path branched to the right; with a guttural exclamation of relief Carpaccio moved from her side, stooping to pick up a blossoming branch apparently broken from the Judas-tree swaying over a wall hard by. "The Capelli told us that this token would show the road by which I could enter from the canal unobserved," he whispered exultantly. "Now, *messer*,

since you seem to stick to your will like wax, follow me."

The girl's excitement was growing on her as Carpaccio paused before a small door in the wall crested by the Judas-tree. "To heel, *messer*, and silence, if we would not sleep on the bed of the canal to-night with sacks for our bedclothes!" he breathed.

The door, left on the latch, swung easily, to Fiamma's dissatisfaction, her conductor pausing to secure it with a key which he took from his purse. The almond-scented fragrance of the tree overhead filled the tiny garden which Carpaccio crossed, bending his tall old head to enter a second doorway obscured by a flying buttress of the grim wall of the actual palace. As the breath of the purple blossoms died away, some strange electricity of memory set Fiamma standing once more in the white-gleaming pavilions of the Florentine gardens. The fair face of Bianca Capelli dawned with maddening distinctness on her thought, bringing the tremor of fierce quick anger upon her, till she came to an instant's panting pause in the dark passage, along which the astrologer was pressing with steps suddenly grown confident.

But the vision which thrilled her to such passion did not pass away. On the darkness through which her eyes had been peering, as her longing for revenge might strain through the near future, the hated face smote suddenly luminous on a background of light. With one white hand holding back a curtain the Capelli stood bending eagerly forward, a frown lining the smooth forehead over which tendrils of the golden hair strayed seductively.

"Good master Carpaccio, you are late!" she cried in a pettish remonstrance, perceiving the astrologer advancing upon her. The instant's check alone had saved Fiamma from

being swept into the rapid searching glance of the unexpected apparition.

"Excellency, the stars were not favourable till this hour," Carpaccio returned gravely. He passed with Bianca into the room beyond, the curtain, as it fell, blotting out the candle-light.

Noiselessly as a thought Fiamma stole forward. To crouch beside the curtain, and gauge the right moment for appearing in the chamber beyond, was her first idea; but as she stretched a cautious hand to the heavy velvet, the snuffle of a lapdog on the other side struck as alarmingly on her ear as a lion's roar might have done. Hastily she gathered herself up, becoming aware, as she did so, of a draught of air which a further groping progress revealed as blowing down a narrow stair some three feet beyond the doorway. A faint glimmer of light summoned Fiamma to the ascent, step after step being achieved with that absolute poise of muscle which ensures noiseless movement. As she mounted, the light resolved itself into gleams falling through a pierced screen of carved wood into a small gallery on which the stairs gave entrance.

Quietly the girl crept onward, pressing her face at last against the grating forming the front of the little space. She found herself looking down into a small chapel hung with embroidered silks and bright with candles burning in brazen holders. But the details of the scene, where apparently for better secrecy the Capelli had given tryst to the astrologer, went by the watcher unheeded, as her eyes fastened on the figure which, in a white woollen garment, knelt with unbound golden hair upon the altar-step.

The swimming blue eyes were turned raptly on the great Christ above the altar, the dimpled hands clasped in an attitude of completest submission; but the instincts im-

planted in pure natures, which vibrate surely as a divining-rod in the presence of what is unexpected by the passing crowd, thrilled Fiamma to a loathing of such devotion. As she looked her glance was distracted by the hangings being pushed aside from a window opening on the night, from whence Carpaccio turned back into the chapel. The old man's wandering hazel eyes shone almost black in the paleness of his face. A white woollen garment, similar to that clothing the kneeling woman at the altar, seemed to increase the height of his spare figure, to which a mantle of purple and a tall cap blazoned with strange signs gave an appearance of priestly dignity.

"Excellency," he whispered with an odd trembling eagerness, "I read strange things in the stars to-night. As I looked, my star rushed down the heavens and disappeared, and yours, though it mounts, advances towards danger. Excellency, there is anger in the stars. Forego your purpose of looking into the beryl; it is a great sin to take upon us."

His warning, feigned or not, woke the Capelli's cruel smile on lips seemingly parted by just-breathed prayers.

"The anger of the stars is, like themselves, at a safe distance," she said. "Since Cassandra sent me word that to-night is the night in seven years on which the spirit of the beryl must bear himself submissive to her will, I have scarce had patience to bear with the moments crawling towards this hour slowly as snails up a gondola-stake. What is it to me if your star, with a score of farthing rushlights like it, is quenched by some wandering wind? Mine rises and will rise, till the moon itself is shamed by its splendour."

Her light tinkling laughter filled the pause which fell on her arrogant

speech, till the astrologer ended it by a sudden imperative sign. As though in obedience to a signal from that law of circumstance which marshals the puppets on life's stage, he seemed to have merged his personality in the part for which he had been cast.

"Bathe your naked feet and hands, then, in this holy water from the well of Bethlehem, which alone can cleanse the stains of sin at touch of which the blessed beryl would spring into a thousand atoms," he commanded. Fiamma, from the gallery above, could not tell whether the flicker of the candles shifted lights and shadows over the old face, seeming to writhe the features into a mocking play.

A coquettish gasp followed on his words, as Bianca shook the slippers wrought with seed-pearls from arched rosy-white feet, which touched the water in the silver basin daintily as small fluttering birds might do. Once, twice, seven times in obedience to Carpaccio's finger, she dipped them, and then knelt again upon the altar-step.

Carpaccio turned to the altar, taking thence a sphere of pale-green beryl set within a silver zone. "With pure hands take, with pure eyes read, with pure heart learn the lesson which the beryl holds for you," he said slowly.

A shower of drops flew from Bianca's wet hands as she extended them in an eager gesture. Hardly, however, was the transparent globe in her hands than the golden head was thrown back in a shuddering aversion. "Ah, what a stifling odour!" she murmured petulantly, with all a Venetian woman's morbid sensibility to even the most subtle perfumes.

"Haste, the spirit of the beryl strives already against the yoke!" ejaculated the astrologer.

The Capelli fastened her gaze upon the globe which she held as far from her as possible. In her devouring curiosity the watcher in the gallery raised her head above the parapet. Carpaccio had moved back beside the altar.

As the three looked, the beryl began to fade, chilling in the warm hands on which it rested to a clouded whiteness. Then the livid colour was suddenly branded by lurid letters leaping to life within the stone: *Harlot and murderess!*

Startled beyond prudence Fiamma bent breathlessly over the carved rail, which creaked beneath her weight. The sound seemed to pierce through the Capelli's stupefaction; she glanced upwards, and at the sight of the face glimmering whitely through the shadows she sprang with a shriek of fear and anger to her feet, flinging the beryl from her full into Capaccio's face. The old man staggered, swayed, and fell among the fragments of the stone.

As Bianca rushed from the chapel Fiamma had taken the staircase almost at a bound, in the hope of cutting off her flight; but she was

too late; the Capelli had vanished. As her foot was on the last step the sharp howl of the lapdog, whose snuffle had startled her before, struck her ear. As she raised the chapel-curtain the little beast dashed past her, its whimper swelling again in its outstretched throat. Fearful lest it should sound an alarm to the household, Fiamma stooped to lay hold of it, but at the instant it staggered over on its side, its little body twitching in a convulsion.

Shivering under some vague fear Fiamma stood in the doorway, sending a whisper hissing into the darkness. "Are you in love with the *strap-pado*, master wizard, that you tarry here?"

There was no movement of the silent figure, face downward on the altar-step. The limp hands lay upon the fragments of the beryl, as though the astrologer kept seisin of his magic to the last.

With a low sound that was half-prayer, half-cry, Fiamma was about to rush across the intervening space, when a hand was laid upon her shoulder. She turned, to look straight into the eyes of Mark Talbot.

(To be continued.)

THE INFLUENCE OF PURITANISM ON AMERICAN LITERATURE.

It is a much debated question how far the work of American writers deserves the name of a national literature. It is asserted, and with some plausibility, that American literature is but the shadow of a name, that the products of American thought are not in any way to be distinguished from the literary work of contemporary England, and that where any diversity is discoverable it is but a local manifestation which has had no permanent effect in stamping the hall-mark of nationality on the literature of which it forms a part.

At first sight there may appear to be good grounds for the assertion. In England and America are found two peoples sprung originally from a common stock, with a common history and speaking a common tongue; and in such a case a similarity, superficial at least and probably actual, will inevitably appear in the written examples of their common thought. A close study of American literature, however, will, partially at any rate, clear the student's mind of the prejudices which this argument has implanted. In the end, though he may protest that her literature is not yet fully developed, he will be forced to admit that it exists, and that reared as it has been in a climate and amid circumstances wholly diverse, this literature has attained to many characteristics which cannot be associated to any considerable extent with her English sister.

There is one influence in particular which, while it may have lightly

touched those literatures of an older growth, has affected that of America in an altogether different degree. In America the history of her literature is the history of her religious development, and consequently to a very considerable extent the history of Calvinism, the religion of her youth.

The foundation of the American colonies was effected at a period when English literature was richer and more varied than it had ever been before or has ever been since. The brilliance and versatility of the Elizabethans, culminating in the genius of Shakespeare, had attained for England the foremost place in literary Europe. No other period of the modern world has in one nation produced so many masters whether in poetry, drama, history, philosophy, or travel, whose fame has survived the inexorable judgment of time. But the settlers of America, though imbued with the spirit of the Elizabethans, carried little but the spirit of this literature to their new home. The gentlemen adventurers who established themselves in Virginia and the South, though their leader was the gifted Raleigh, were themselves men rather of the sword than of the pen; and if some of them, like gallant James Smith, have left records of their experiences, their writings approach more nearly the uncouth baldness of the skipper's log than the polished prose of the courtiers of Elizabeth. And if the first colonists were rough and ready, their successors were only too often luckless redemptioners or the sweep-

ings of the English gaols. The Northern colonists, on the other hand, were of a different type. The first of them were Puritans of the Puritans, and as such could scarcely be expected to carry to the Promised Land the taint of that literature which they regarded with abhorrence as the subtlest instrument of Belial himself.

In these circumstances, save in so far as they could claim a share in the glories of the past, the American people started their national life and continued throughout nearly two centuries without producing anything which could in any way deserve the name of literature. So far as the South is concerned there appears to have been literally no productive thought. The more considerable families, it is true, living an almost feudal existence each in what became an ancestral domain, preserved out of a certain pride of birth some standard of literary education. But it was wholly with the literature of the past that they were familiar; the thoughts of contemporary Europe touched them not at all; the events which shook the foundations of the elder world were to them but the echoes of a distant storm, and it was not until the Revolution that they aroused themselves to a sleepy interest in aught that lay beyond their immediate borders.

In the North things were somewhat better. Here, under the nominal rule of royal governors, there existed in fact a theocracy. The Calvinist divines were the real rulers; and each in his own church, a church generally synonymous with the township, held almost undisputed sway over the minds and bodies of his flock. With them Calvinism was carried to further extremes than had been possible in Elizabethan England. All outside

its communion were not merely heretics but rebels, upon whom the Church was not unwont to vent its righteous indignation; and the severity of its punishments appears again and again, not only in spasmodic outbursts like the trials for witchcraft at Salem, but in the legal codes of the provinces whose extremest example is the famous Blue Laws of Massachusetts.

At the same time Calvinism and its ministers were the only force which to any appreciable degree kept alive in the land the flickering flame of learning. Harvard, the first and greatest of the American universities, was founded in 1636 by the Calvinist divines, in the avowed hope that there the most promising of the new generation should be educated in the tenets of the Calvinistic faith, and be ready upon the death of their fathers to take their places as the spiritual leaders of the people. But Harvard at its inception, although its course included the elements of education, was in effect a school of theology alone. It served the purpose of its founders indeed excellently well, for its alumni, even such of them as were unlearned in all else, were yet deeply instructed in the dogmas of Calvinism, and capable in the highest degree of carrying on the fight against heresy and schism in which the orthodox Church was soon to be strenuously engaged. Until the foundation of Yale University some sixty years later, Harvard was the one centre of light in a land of literary darkness. With few exceptions the graduates who passed from its shelter into the Church were the only men of literature in the Northern colonies, and for at least a hundred years almost the only writings which could boast of any literary form were the voluminous works of these Calvinist preachers.

Of these same preachers one at

least, Cotton Mather, had something approaching a European reputation. His cast of mind may be estimated from the fact that he was one of the judges at the Salem trials, while his literary activity will appear from the number of his works of which between the years 1678 and 1728 he published some four hundred volumes. The bulk of these were entirely theological, and the burden of all appears to have been the glorification of the sect of which he was the most zealous leader.

Before his death the theocracy had fallen, the priesthood had lost its power, and in the eighteenth century his greatest successor, Jonathan Edwards, was driven from church to church by the advance of those liberal opinions which the best part of his life was spent in combating. For the inevitable reaction had already arrived. The country was no longer inhabited only by the immediate descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers who were accustomed to suffer gladly the yoke of their spiritual masters. Other colonists had followed, men of a lighter faith. The Scotch-Irish from the north of Ireland had spread themselves along the verge of the western wilderness from north to south, and in the heart of New England a large influx of German immigrants threatened in places to submerge the original colonists and assume their powers. In these circumstances the Calvinist ascendancy could not be maintained. An opposition sprang up formed by a combination of all those of more liberal views on whom the priestly domination pressed most hardly. The University of Yale was founded in 1701 as a counterbalance to the Calvinist college at Harvard, and by degrees the liberal principles there inculcated took root and flourished, until they found a resting-place not only in Yale but in the very seat of Calvinism itself.

In purer letters the position of the North was not much better than that of the South. In the domain of poetry Mrs. Ann Bradstreet, known as the Tenth Muse, gained some local fame, while Michael Wigglesworth compiled the Bay Psalm-Book, a metrical paraphrase of the psalms and published several volumes of very villainous English verse. In history and biography, too, some few works appeared, but such examples of general literature as these are hardly now of any interest even as literary curiosities. So far as the poetry is concerned it was well nigh entirely of a sacred character, while the history and biography were, in effect, if not in form, the history of Puritanism and the biographies of her leading divines.

Up to the revolutionary times, therefore, there appeared not only no evidence of national literary thought, but no work of importance which was even a fairly worthy imitation of the literature of the mother country. The standard of individual education was, it is true, far higher than in England, for actual illiteracy was practically unknown; but this education, though good in itself, produced little creative thought except in the dusty region of theological polemics, and by reducing all men to a dead level of unimaginative knowledge was rather an adverse than a favouring influence.

With the approach of the Revolution, however, came a new phase. The place in American thought once occupied by theology was now held by politics; the preacher yielded place in the national estimation to the orator, and though oratory is not literature, the orators were the nearest approach to literary men that the period produced.

The best example of the new era is Benjamin Franklin. Born in obscurity, self-educated, and self-

made, he yet attained a world-wide celebrity not only as a champion of American independence, but as a dignified representative of his country at the polished courts of Europe, while in the domain of science his attainments have never perhaps been adequately recognised. As a man of letters, too, he was by no means contemptible. His autobiography, if not a monument of literary art, is a considerable advance on anything that preceded it, but some of his best work was done in his letters and political pamphlets in which his prose is of almost Addisonian dignity; and one letter in particular to the English papers, in which he declares that "the grand leap of the whale up the Falls of Niagara is esteemed by all who have seen it as one of the finest spectacles in nature," is remarkable as being the first example in literary history of what is now generally recognised as American humour, a humour whose main characteristic is the exaggeration of nonsense in the midst of the soberest sense. In other respects Franklin is perhaps best known as the author of *POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC*, whose now hackneyed aphorisms, such as "Honesty is the best Policy," and "God helps them that help themselves," have passed into the proverbial language of both England and America.

Nor was Franklin alone among the Revolutionary leaders in producing stately and dignified prose. Jefferson, Hamilton, Adams, and many other leaders of the nationalist movement, adorned even the political pamphlets which they published in such profusion with a dignified grace of style savouring more of the English essayists of the previous century than of the crude utterances which one is accustomed to associate with the ephemeral literature of politics. Even while they prated of the rights of man, of

liberty, equality, and fraternity, their writings are permeated for the most part with the unexpected but ever saving grace of common-sense.

The political essay, then, was brought at this time to a high state of perfection; but neither politics nor oratory can supply the place which literature leaves unfilled, and of pure literature in all the length and breadth of the colonies there was still hardly a vestige. Although theology had been for the time superseded in men's minds by the more practical calls of politics, the leaders of the people were the same as of yore. The public hero was the orator, but the orator was as often as not the preacher also, and if in any case it were not so, it would probably be found upon enquiry that he came of a preaching stock and had passed his youth beneath the iron hand of the Calvinist faith.

In the years that succeeded the Revolution the conditions were much the same. Such writers as there were, and writers of the first rank were almost altogether absent, were derived almost exclusively from New England, the home of Puritanism, and were affected more or less directly by their religious environment. Among the men of the higher class Timothy Dwight, the President of Yale, published several books of verse in the manner of Pope, for whose more slovenly work they might indeed have been mistaken; and a select coterie, who have since gained the title of the Hertford Wits, did their utmost, with little power and less success, to produce a taste for literature in their contemporaries. The net result of their labours was of small importance, but their style was remarkably good, and as has been said of another assembly, while they did nothing in particular they did it very well. There was in truth nothing living. Form there was in plenty, but even

this was borrowed for the most part from the English writers of a previous age. The styles of Goldsmith, Pope, and Samuel Butler were at a premium, and beneath the swelling periods there were stagnation and death.

With the new century, however, there came a new birth. The spirit of literature was reincarnated, and from this time the consideration of American literature really commences. At last American thought ceased to follow in the footsteps of an effete civilisation and struck out a new line for herself. By this time the strict Calvinism which had formerly held undisputed sway in the North had fallen to the ground before the advance of more liberal opinions, and had ceased to hold the literature of the country in its icy grasp. Brockden Brown, James Fenimore Cooper, William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, and Edgar Allen Poe were the first prophets of the new era, and of these neither Brown, Cooper, nor Poe was influenced, unless indirectly, by the Puritan spirit.

These five writers are all associated more or less closely with the middle States of the Union, and all spent the best part of their literary lives in the neighbourhood of New York. Poe, it is true, is claimed by the South, whence his father came and where part at least of his youth was spent, but his work was almost wholly done further north.

Bryant is a poet of some standing, who has his admirers even in England. Mr. Steadman has applauded him as the Father of American Song, but he appears in general to be too burdened by the literary traditions to which he succeeded. His poems are pretty but uninspired, sweet but shallow and lifeless, perfect in form but lacking in substance. Lowell, in the *FABLE FOR CRITICS*, describes him as a "smooth silent iceberg," a description which

might be applied with almost equal justice to many of his contemporaries in American poetry; and although the writer was perhaps only half in earnest, the criticism is not far from the truth.

Washington Irving, again, is chiefly remarkable for the delicacy of his style in which he certainly excelled contemporary English authors; but except in this respect there is little to distinguish his work as natively American, while Poe, on the other hand, with a more original genius struck out a new and powerful line for himself, little affected either by English models or American tradition.

New England, with her Puritan heritage, had for the time lost the literary ascendancy which she had held in default of a competitor in the previous century; but she lost it only for the time. Even in the first decade of the century there was growing up within her borders a circle of writers who in their prime forty years later represent the literary splendour of American history. In the meantime the preparations for their advent were not lacking. The growth of periodical literature was enormous, writers of the second class were numbered by the score, and after 1819 the revival of the study of modern languages at the universities familiarised the people with the great masters of Europe and prepared them to recognise and welcome the masters who were to arise in their midst.

The first product of the revival of learning was the historian. Parkman is a writer whose work, except to students, seems to be much less known than it should be beyond his own country; but Prescott and Motley have world-wide reputations both as historians of authority and masters in literature. The former suffers somewhat from an exuberance of language, and his physical disabilities,

as was the case also with Parkman, prevented his work having that exactness which the study of history demands, while Motley, though more exact, allows himself too often to be carried away by religious prejudice. His Spaniard, though he smile, is always a villain, while his Dutchman, like the Boer of Continental imagination, is an angel almost unawares.

In the meantime the place in popular favour once occupied by Calvinism had now been taken by Unitarianism; and with Unitarianism, and arising out of it, there appeared that system of philosophy known as Transcendentalism, which in its excesses has hardly found a parallel in the regions of the old world. But the influence of Puritanism still made itself felt. Its lofty standard of thought and life survived though under a different name, and the community at Concord really based its rules of life upon the Puritan ideal. Taken as they were from the very strongholds of the Puritan faith, cradled in many cases in the homes of Puritan preachers, and educated often in the schools of the strictest sect, it was impossible that the leaders of the new movement, even when giving way to its excesses, should cut themselves altogether adrift from the ideals which birth and education had implanted in their hearts.

In its more moderate courses the new philosophy had great results, for it produced a new era of speculative thought. To have produced Emerson alone would have made it worthy of respect, and he, although the greatest, was not by any means alone among its great supporters. But he at least was truly great, perhaps the greatest man America has produced; and he possessed a moderating quality of common-sense in which many of his followers were conspicuously lacking. In many respects he resembles more

the great philosophers of the past than any of our moderns. He "hitched his wagon to a star," and was rather the prophet and teacher than the artist and literary man, while both in prose and verse he had the limitations which his position entailed. He confines himself almost entirely to Nature and abstract thought; humanity is almost altogether absent from his work; it is wanting in life, action, and passion. His seat is set aloft, and his gaze is too steadily fixed upon the stars to reckon of the storms of life; and while he inspires awe and respect, he cannot arouse sympathy or stimulate enthusiasm.

No other of the Transcendentalists even approached the position of Emerson. His best known followers were Thoreau and Alcott, and one is sometimes puzzled to know whether to treat them with respect or ridicule. In his studies of Nature, in WALDEN for instance, Thoreau is a writer of acknowledged power; but his eccentricity was so pronounced as to dwarf all other attributes, and he is remembered to-day rather as the inspired tramp than as the man of letters; while Alcott was, among these new philosophers, the man of all others who best justified Lowell's satirical indictment.

About this time there arose a movement which, even from a purely literary point of view, has had greater effect and wrought better work than any other in American history. The new wave of thought which produced the excesses of Transcendentalism, produced at the same time a spirit of reform, and that spirit seized immediately upon the question of slavery, the subject which lay nearest to its hand.

American literature has always suffered from the narrowness of American national experience, and

this narrowness has been accentuated by the early Puritanism which at one stroke ruled out of life a great part of the joy of existence. It tended always to become parochial and unsympathetic. The anti-slavery movement, and the civil war in which it culminated, provided it with new ideas and infused into it for the first time an approach to passion. The movement had its origin in New England the home of Puritanism, and its prophet was before all things a New Englander.

John Greenleaf Whittier was the poet of New England, and he suffered like all his predecessors from his environment. The circumscribed limits of his life combined with a lack of humour to make much of his writings superficially commonplace. His support of the Abolitionist cause was at once his literary gain and loss, for all that there is of fire and passion in his work can be traced to his enthusiasm in this movement, and at the same time all that is most imperfect, most formless, and most ephemeral. Had he remained uninfluenced he would have been perhaps the better poet. He would have been simple, sincere, and at times fervent; his work would have been more perfect in form, but like that of Bryant it would have remained cold, provincial, and commonplace.

Apart from Whittier himself the leaders of the anti-slavery party were rather orators than men of letters, but at the same time the movement profoundly affected all the great writers of the day and, in common with Whittier, Longfellow, Lowell, and Holmes owed to it much of the power and many of the best qualities that their works possess. Longfellow to a considerable extent shares the faults of Whittier. He is indeed picturesque at times, but his imagina-

tion was never creative. Infinitely simple and infinitely sweet he may be, but it is with the sweetness that too often cloys.

Over all the writers of the New England school there hovers the shadow of Puritan influence. Even Oliver Wendell Holmes was always tilting with a certain bitterness at the ghost of an influence which he himself had felt, and in no American writer does it show its power more plainly than in Nathaniel Hawthorne, the artist of the group. In all his work it stands for ever in the background making its presence felt in an air of dread solemnity, an atmosphere of mysterious melancholy which fastens on every character and holds the story itself in its relentless grasp. For fifty years Hawthorne lived in his native province, never leaving it for long, and he never succeeded in shaking off the burden of his Puritan birth. But though as a result the range of his vision was limited and his habit of thought provincial, by so much the more he gained in individuality as the foremost of native American novelists, for he was left the natural product of his time and country untouched by the fashions of an elder world. His style has a dignity of its own, which is perhaps increased by the brooding melancholy of his themes; and it is only on occasion that one regrets the broader thought and wider vision which might have been his in another environment.

The New England school ended with the lives of its first members. The centre of power in America has long been slowly shifting westwards, and this is true of literary power no less than of commercial or political. New York had for a time been shadowed by the literary glow of Concord and Boston, but it had never been totally eclipsed. Even

in the palmiest days of *THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY* and *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* the periodical literature of New York was of the highest repute, and among her literary men were Dana, Curtis, Raymond, Bayard Taylor and Walt Whitman, the apostle of Anarchy. With the change in the literary centre the literature of America was withdrawn from the influence which had for so long mastered its course; and now that influence only remains as a tradition, a survival from the past which is fast disappearing in the march of time.

While the North had been making a literature for itself, the South had remained almost stationary in its old condition of literary stagnation. Its social constitution was not one calculated to encourage the growth of a literary class, and the civil war, while it destroyed the constitution, destroyed with it the means of gratifying whatever literary taste had existed before. Of the few poets the South produced, Sims, Tignor, Timrod, and Sidney Lanier, the last alone can be credited with anything like genius. Like Poe, his work has a warmth and colour hardly to be found in the North, and over some of his poems there is a glamour which is strangely fascinating.

Since the setting of those literary stars whose brilliance illumined the middle decades of the last century, American literature has been becalmed. Little in her poetry tempts comparison even with the work of our English poets; her philosophers are scarcely known beyond her own borders, and in one region alone, the region of fiction, has she improved upon her position in the past.

Half a century ago it appeared possible and even probable that the efforts of a few men, the giants of American literature, would in time produce an American school which

should have distinctive American characteristics, and in due course should cut itself free from the shackles of English tradition and work out its own salvation by following national methods in evolving a national style. The gods, however, were adverse. So long as literary America consisted but of a mere strip of land upon the Atlantic coast, so long as there were but two nations, the cold North and the sunny South, to harmonise into a consistent whole, there was still hope for the national school. The genius of Bryant and Poe, of Whittier and Lanier, though distant as the poles, might in time find one common denominator; but with the march of time the possibility, or at least the probability, has passed. The America of to-day is far other than the America of yesterday. She has stretched her borders to Mexico in the South and to the Golden Gate in the West. By conquest or colonisation she has brought under her flag Spaniard, Indian, and Negro, while immigration and expulsion from older lands has given her a motley horde of citizens, Irish, Italians, Magyars, Teutons, Poles, and Russians, a very Penticostal crowd, whose strange and often savage blood she must assimilate with her own before she can become a single and united nation. And although the task may, and no doubt will, in time be accomplished, the question of a single national literature will still remain untouched. The country is too big. The South looks with suspicion on the West, and both are leagued against the East; the desires of New Orleans are not the desires of Chicago, and the ideals of Vermont would be scouted as outworn upon the soil of Colorado. It may be centuries before the work of all these warring factions, spread over half a world, can be welded into a single homogeneous literature.

What has been the value of the Puritan influence upon American literature as a whole? If yet but half developed this literature certainly exists, and the first and most powerful influence which has moulded its youth has been the all-pervasive shadow of that austere Calvinism which has affected, if not on the surface at least by under-currents, the work of well nigh every writer who was born under its ban. Some of its effects have, indeed, been excellent. One is a certain moral cleanness which distinguishes the works of American writers over those of every other nation, and stands out in marked contrast to much of the literature of England, and still more of that of the Continent. But on the other hand Puritanism has much to answer for. To its influence can be traced many of the defects that are observable in American literature. In that literature in general there is little that is rich or rare, too much that is common-place and simple. Cold Calvinism has chilled the imagination, and it is only where the warmer blood of the South has had play, as in Poe or Lanier, that a more generous colour has been given to the work.

In other climes literature traces its origin from the spontaneous songs and ballads of the people. The German was born in the NIEBELUNGEN LIED and the songs of the wandering Minnesingers. Celtic literature begins with the poems of Ossian, while the literature of England is based in great part on the fragmentary ballads which are preserved in Percy's RELIQUES OF ANCIENT POETRY. In America it was otherwise. There literature was a blind child who knew nothing of the joys of youth. Separated from it by two hundred years, it was full grown when its eyes were opened to

the beauties of the universe. Continuity with the traditions of the past was lost, and without the inspiration of an historic past Americans have evolved a literature of their own; and in so far as they were aided by history at all, it was only by the unhallowed history of the present. In America Calvinism appears to have taken the place of those traditions which in other lands have infused life and colour into literature; and though here and there individuals have cast off the closer of its toils, they have never entirely escaped from the environment of youth, and "suckled in a creed outworn," have been in after-life ever haunted by its sombre shadow.

On the whole the influence of Puritanism has not been an altogether favourable one. Little of the Elizabethan brilliance has survived. All that was cut off by a century of Puritan ascendancy, and little was given in exchange. Dignity perhaps has been gained, clearness of diction too and purity of thought, but the fire that purified is dead and the cold greyneess of the ashes is all that remains. One cannot undertake a study of the literature of America without some longing for a greater warmth, brighter colour, a more fervid imagination.

Whether these qualities will be supplied in the future remains to be seen. The younger writers of America certainly possess them to a degree undiscoverable in those of the past. Over some, perhaps over the majority of them, the Puritan tradition, in so far at least as it was evil, seems to have lost its power. It is to them that American literature looks for her future strength. May they not be found wanting.

H. SHEFFIELD CLAPHAM.

FOX-HUNTING IN THE LAKE COUNTRY.

The forest music is to hear the hounds
 Rend the thin air, and with a lusty cry
 Awake the drowsy echoes and confound
 Their perfect language in a mingled voice.

IN Threlkeld churchyard, at the foot of Saddleback or Blencathra, is a remarkable cenotaph. It is quite modest in stature and unpretentious in design, but in other respects there is not the like of it within the limits of this kingdom. Around the four sides of this simple monument of stone are engraved the lines from Gay which head this page, while on its face we may read: "A few friends have contributed to raise this stone in loving memory of the undernamed who in their generation were noted veterans of the chase, all of whom lie in this churchyard." Then follow the names of nearly forty local worthies, statesmen,¹ villagers, tenant-farmers, all of whom, as the dates assure us, have passed away within the last two score years. A space below is being gradually filled up with the names of their surviving comrades, or of those who may be thought worthy to figure on this unique scroll of fame.

This, be it noted, is a genuine expression of local feeling, and could only be possible where fox-hunting is the passion of the people not the sport of the privileged and the few. And the Lake Country is the only corner of Great Britain where such an attitude exists. There is no literary or artistic posing in the motives that erected this stone, or any ulterior designs on the imagina-

tion of the passing tourist, who, I fancy, knows nothing of it or of the strong local traditions it so curiously emphasises. It may be noticed that Gay for once, not Wordsworth, is the bard drawn upon by the authors of the memorial, and thus one is spared what would most certainly have been a deplorable incongruity. And who shall say that the men who raised this stone were not poets too, and many of those whose names are on it, after their fashion, which does not happen to run freely to words or pen and ink?

Anything farther removed from the conventional notion of a fox-hunter than these sportsmen and their equally ardent and hardy successors it would be difficult to imagine. Not one of them ever donned pink or crossed a horse while in pursuit of his favourite pastime. Yet what most of these men did not and do not know about hunting is not, as the saying goes, much worth knowing. An acknowledged authority on these matters has somewhere stated that about half the men in England who go hunting do so because they like it; the motives that send the other half into the field being mixed and easy of enumeration for any ordinary man of the world, but of no importance here. Of the more genuine Nimrods it is further suggested that about five out of every six hunt for the riding alone and care little for the sport itself, of which they practically know nothing. I have a

¹ The term *statesman* in the Lake Country is equivalent to *freeholder*.

vague notion that masters of hounds and hunt-servants would take a more cynical view even than this. Still it must not be forgotten that the modern conditions and needs of hunting in most countries have done away with much of the interest attached to the old methods of long slow runs, and early mornings on the cold drag.

At any rate it is certain that the Fell fox-hunter can only have one possible motive for taking the field, namely to see hounds hunt. Beagles and otter-hounds, since late hours became the fashion, attract troops of followers all over England and of both sexes, who like to meet their friends, lunch out perhaps in pleasant company, kill time cheerfully, and together prove their devotion to sport and be in the vogue generally. But I do not think any of these gentle stimulants have much to do with collecting the small groups of enthusiasts who accompany the five packs of hounds which hunt the various districts of the Lake Country.

So far as I know there are only two communities in the world who hunt the fox on foot for pure sport and with the ardour of an hereditary passion. The second is to be found in Virginia, and in the neighbouring States who caught the fever from her, while she herself of course brought it from England in early Georgian times. The Virginians, it is true, usually hunted on horseback, but not with any view to horsemanship, and where the country was too rough they followed on foot with equal ardour. But whether on foot or on horseback their whole interest, like that of the Lakemen, was in their hounds, of which, however, owing to the wooded character of the mountains, they did not see anything like so much. Yet I have known small farmers, men of no substance, waste half their lives in this profitless sport, while deer, bear, small

game or fish within their reach would have furnished a valuable addition to their livelihood if pursued with the same assiduity. There must surely be some magical fascination about the pursuit of the fox, wholly distinct from the steeple-chasing part of the business with which it is nowadays mainly associated.

The five packs which divide the Lake Country between them hunt from Ullswater, Threlkeld, Coniston, Loweswater, and Eskdale respectively. Each have simple but effective establishments, and between them all just contrive to keep down the stock of mountain foxes sufficiently for the needs of the sheep-farmers, who are for the most part themselves ardent sportsmen, and would stretch a point before resorting to baser methods of protecting their lambs. By not sparing vixens with cubs, and waging war on Reynard to the knife, so far as hounds can wage it, the happy mean is just maintained, and a hearty zest and popularity given to the sport which has no parallel in countries where foxes have to be preserved by favour, by vigilant diplomacy, and a much disputed damage-fund, for a few rich people to ride after. Moreover poisoning foxes in a country where the sheep-dog is ubiquitous and an extremely valuable member of society would not be the easy method of destroying them that it is elsewhere.

It is not, I think, unfair to the three last-named packs, of which, however, I know nothing, to cite the Blencathra, kennelled near Threlkeld, and the Ullswater quartered in Pat-terdale, as the chief of them. The first boasts the oldest master of hounds in the kingdom, to wit Mr. Crozier, whose reign has lasted for over sixty years, while the Ullswater for a very long period have had the services of the most accomplished and best known huntsman in the Lake

Country, Joe Bowman, a veteran whose physical endurance is a matter of fireside anecdote even in a country where such qualities are general, and whose skill in hunting is not less pre-eminent.

As the head of Ullswater is justly held by great numbers of people to be the pearl of all the Lake Country, the visitor who would see something of mountain fox-hunting, and at the same time has other days in his mind, could not do better than throw in his lot with the hounds that are kennelled there, and take up his quarters at Glenridding, or near by. Here, with the rugged summits of the Helvellyn range towering upon his left, the long and winding lake shining before his face, and the wild deer forest of Martindale lifting its lonely uplands on his right, he should be happy enough as the shy spring of the North steals over the glorious scene. For April, strange though it may sound for the moment, is the most active month of all among the mountain packs, and for the visitor on hunting bent beyond any doubt the right season. Few of the obstacles that April brings to an ordinary hunting country exist on this wild region of rock and sheep-fed turf; while the very real terrors of storm and mist which destroy much of the pleasure of a mountain hunt, even when hounds can go, are less imminent at this dawn of spring. Vixens and litters, too, are not here a matter of regard, while lastly the bitter cry of the sheep-farmer comes at this lambing season from various quarters and stimulates the huntsman to even greater endeavours than are implied in the regular programme. Then again, even were not this in itself so delectable a spot, it is well to be near the kennels, when arrangements are sometimes made from day to day and hours are early.

Mr. Hasel of Dalemmain, near Penrith, is master of the Ullswater pack, taking up a partial subscription. This kind of hunting, however, makes the huntsman of necessity a more independent functionary and leaves him a good deal to himself. He has to reach distant fixtures on foot, spend many nights away at inns and farm-houses with his pack who have not only the big Ullswater and Shap district, but the distant Pennines often as the scene of their operations; and Bowman's sonorous voice is well known as far away as the slopes of Crossfell and the moors round Kirby Stephen. The Ullswater hounds have run foxes not only into Yorkshire and killed them there, but on many occasions have carried them as far afield as the sources of the Tees and breasted the deep heather of the Durham and West Northumbrian grouse-moors.

Bowman and his charges are domiciled when at home at the foot of Grisedale, the narrow vale so familiar to the scores of tourists who in August cross the Helvellyn range from Grasmere into Patterdale. Grisedale, however, is lonely enough in April, and possibly the few tourists who pass down that way will hardly notice the grey stone kennels across the beck with their pale-in yards, unless the lumps of horseflesh dangling from the trees around them should arrest their curious gaze. April is perhaps a trifle early for all but the crag-climber, the fox-hunter, or the fisherman. The beautiful woods of Patterdale, which clothe the foot of Grisedale and touch the margin of the lake, are as yet but sprinkled with the early green of the larch. The sycamore and the birch almost alone show the touch of spring on a close inspection. The beech, the oak, and the alder by the streams are still as black as in winter, though by this very tardiness they allow of many a

glimpse of gleaming foam and loud-voiced cataract that in the leafy season is wholly hidden. The narrow ribbons of meadow that wind up the dales into the sombre wild beyond are bright enough themselves in their fresh carpet of green, and are freely spangled with the white flecks of the Herdwick lambs which prove so sore a temptation to poor Reynard at this very moment when his family larder needs the choicest dainties. The heights above and beyond are grim and sullen still as winter left them. The snow-crushed bracken is bleached and brown; the bilberry and the upland sod have not yet quickened; and the tawny, frost-bitten, bent grasses of the moorland do little as yet to light the shoulders of the gloomy crags that give the eastern face of the Helvellyn group a dignity that, in shadow at any rate, is proof against comparative statistics from Europe, Asia, or America. The snow, too, will be lying in patches on the northern side of Dolywaggon and St. Sunday's crag, in many a sunless cranny upon Striding Edge, will be stretched in white streaks across the gloomy face and laid like a spotless cloth upon the topmost crest of the great mountain itself. I love the becks, too, in early spring, when they run both full and clear, shining bravely in the meadows before their currents shrink and their voices dwindle, and the bordering verdure half smothers them beneath the suns of June. And the ghylls, those fitful children of the mountain tops, will be active now, falling like threads of silver from the cliff edges and roaring in their black channels. It is not, to be sure, a season for basking on mountain slopes, but it is a fine one for walking, and above all for hunting.

A look inside the kennels, when Bowman's charges are at home, would probably surprise most people who were only familiar with the country

they hunted. The old Virginian hound, their only fellow-workman, I have contended, in the world, and with whose doings I have some familiarity, is a little weedy fellow of about two and twenty inches; but here we have a pack scarcely lower or smaller of bone than the Pytchley or the Quorn. Indeed there is a good deal of Warwickshire blood among the fourteen couple now on the flags, and still more of the old Welsh foxhound with its characteristic marking of pale lemon and white. The latter stock would seem more in harmony with this branch of the business, but I fancy their collateral relatives from Monmouth and Glamorgan would be nearly as much at a loss upon these mountains as the other ones from the Shires.

It is curious, by the way, that there is no organised mountain fox-hunting in Wales, where both the area and facilities for it are virtually the same. To be precise, I believe Mr. Jones of Ynysfor near Harlech, when not engaged in lower latitudes on other quarry, does sometimes give the foxes of Snowdonia a rattle: Mr. Doyle again winds up his harrier season on the Black Mountains of Brecon with a campaign against the foxes in lambing-time; and an acquaintance of my own on the edge of the Carmarthen and Cardigan wilderness has the remnants of a hereditary pack of regular mountain foxhounds, which remnant, failing other encouragement, hunts a good deal upon its own account.

To return to Grisedale, however, and to Bowman:—his half dozen terriers would no doubt be catalogued as a wonderful scratch lot by the hypercritical Southern expert; but terriers who are called upon to thread the dark and devious ways that the mountain foxes find refuge in, and to grapple with their sinewy foe in

the bowels of Helvellyn are outside all show-bench or conventional standards, and may regard alien criticism with complaisance. They seem to be rated by the deeds rather than the genealogy or appearance of their ancestors, and are known by local credentials. At any rate there would be no room here for a tyke of only ordinary abilities and average courage. Some of the holts in the cliffs where these Fell foxes find refuge are of a kind such as these little dogs, if they could speak, could tell gruesome tales of. Scarcely one of them but has had subterranean adventures that would have long ago turned their blue or sandy coats white, had they been capable of looking beyond the terror of the moment or been given to reflection. Yonder little tan and white, rough-coated fellow for instance, blinking mildly at us as if he would not hurt a mouse, spent eight days and nights not long ago in the heart of a gloomy precipice overlooking Blea tarn in Mardale. There, again, is a hound not yet fully recovered from a five days' imprisonment beneath the base of Kidsty Pike. Both dogs and foxes, more particularly the former, when young and inexperienced, are apt to get binked, and as *bink* is an almost extinct border-word for a shelf, further explanation of the hunting term will be superfluous. When a hound or terrier gets himself thus landed on a ledge from whence he can escape neither up nor down, ropes are brought into play for his rescue. When more rarely a fox is driven into such a situation the summary method of rolling rocks down on him is resorted to. On June 2nd, the last day of this season, Bowman spent six hours extricating as many hounds who had got themselves binked on Castle Crag in Mardale.

But to return for a moment to

the terriers:—sometimes volunteers of adventurous and sporting inclinations attach themselves to Bowman's team. One such enterprising tyke holds the record of the hunt in the matter of the nether world. He was the property and pet of a statesman's wife near Watermillock, and having no doubt some of the right blood in his veins joined the hounds whenever they came into his country. One day, however, this zealous amateur having gone to ground after a fox in the ordinary way of business failed to return, and the usual efforts, which, I may add, are always vigorous and prolonged whatever the value of the dog, were of no avail. The few days during which hope for his return might be reasonably cherished passed away, and the little dog, who had lived in the house and slept on the hearth, was numbered with the dead and duly mourned by a sorrowing mistress. Four weeks had elapsed and the edge of the old lady's grief had worn off, when one morning a dreadful apparition, without a hair on its body or any flesh on its bones, apparently blind and only just able to drag one leg after the other, crawled into the cottage, staggered towards the hearth, and flung itself down on the rug. There was positively nothing but this intimate proceeding to identify the miserable wreck with the long-lost terrier, such a pitiful object had it become. The dog was saved by careful treatment, and lived for some time afterwards.

Another incident of more recent date has a grimly humorous as well as a tragic side. In this a hound and two terriers were the actors, being all three lost track of underground for several days. Eventually, however, the hound and one terrier arrived together at the kennels, the former so fat as to be scarcely recognisable, the

latter quite poor and lean; and the darkest suspicions were entertained by those best able to judge of the matter that the missing terrier, who was never recovered, had in fact come up inside the hound!

The secret of these long survivals below ground may often be looked for not only in the food afforded by the carcass of the fox itself but in the remnants of old supplies, such as would help to keep life at any rate in a starving dog. It is not often that a hardy dog dies from two or three hours' exposure to a storm in this country and in the day-time too. People whose walks abroad do not lie upon mountain tops in winter will probably think it incredible such a thing could be in our temperate clime. Nevertheless, it actually did happen this very winter just past and on these very hills. Bowman was hunting in Mardale at the time and the hounds had gone forward on a drag over the High Street towards Kirkstone, when a storm from the north-west struck the mountains with terrific force and an almost arctic temperature. The huntsman was travelling along the higher summits with a couple of terriers, and the little dogs could make no stand at all against the storm. Bowman himself, whose feats of endurance I have already remarked are proverbial, began after a time to feel anxiety on his own account. He picked up one terrier, however, and carried it forward in his arms, the other he was compelled to leave to its fate, and it succumbed; indeed he came within measurable distance of meeting his own, being so numbed by cold that he dare not put the dog he was carrying down to rest his arms lest he should be unable to pick it up again, and was himself badly frozen about the face and hands. A moun-

tain huntsman meets at times with strange adventures, though they have not often much flavour of humour about them. But one Sunday afternoon lately we found the veteran complaining of a stiff neck. It seemed that a day or two previously a couple of hounds had jumped from a crag above on to the top of his head, knocked him down, stunned him for a minute or two, and very nearly rolled him off the narrow terrace on which he was standing. This was a novel experience in his long career, and he was chuckling over the recollection of it in spite of the shock he had received and the pain in his neck.

After these sombre pictures of Fell-hunting it will be a cheerful change to turn out with Bowman and his hounds on a sunny April morning. And there is no better bit of country for seeing them run than the great deer-forest of Martindale which stretches from the eastern shores of Ullswater over the long ridge of the High Street and drops down the further side of it to the brink of Haweswater and the romantic hamlet of Mardale. Here is a perfect mountain wilderness of some eighty or a hundred square miles in area, and here, too, the only herd of indigenous red deer in England, save that on Exmoor, still run wild to the number of three or four hundred. The fox-hunter, however, will not see much of them, but when rambling alone on the hills, or fishing by the beck and tarns you may often get a sight, and a fine one it is, of fifty or a hundred of these noble beasts careering up a mountain-slope, or a group of the stags, perhaps, standing out against the sky upon the crest of some rocky steep. They are the property of the Squire of Dalemain, the master of the foxhounds, and have curious forest-rights pertaining to

them. They are shot in due season, and now and then their enterprise, jumping powers, and predatory habits create some friction and a little lively disputation about their borders.

It will be nearer six than seven on the morning of the day appointed for harrying the foxes of Boredale, Bannerdale, and Martindale, when Bowman's horn wakes such few stray tourists as there may be resting around the head of Ullswater; and gives some of them, no doubt, a moment's panic that they have overslept the morning coach. It is hardly necessary to remark that these primitive hours are not observed by the Fell-hunters from any rooted dislike to lying in bed or from any spite against those who do, but for the simple reason that Mr. Fox in this case is not waiting obligingly in a ten or twenty acre covert till such time as his pursuers see fit to come and bustle him out of it. The trail of his nightly or early morning wanderings has to be hit off, and he has to be hunted on the drag, which is every moment growing colder, to his lair among the rocks or screes, or sometimes to ground. It is a pretty sight as the little company wend their way along the valley road; the veteran huntsman in his official scarlet coat and velvet cap, surrounded by eleven or twelve couple of active high-conditioned hounds and the varmint-looking, much be-scarred terriers trotting at his heels. The proverbial breeze of morning has not yet come to ruffle the glassy waters of the lake, and as we cross the valley at the head of it, the smoke from every farm-house chimney is rising in blue columns untouched by the least breath of air. The after-breakfast climb is always the worst, and the seven or eight hundred feet which present themselves immediately in the shape of

Placefell Side serve to remind some of us at any rate that we are no longer in our callow youth. The summit, which is in fact the rim of the wilderness, achieved, there is much excuse for lingering a moment to look down on one of the most beautiful scenes in all the district, with the whole upper reach of Ullswater reflecting rocks, woods, and mountains as in a mirror; the long and narrow Vale of Patterdale, with the Goldrill twisting down it from Brother's-water like a silver coil, and the numerous lateral glens climbing upward into the heart of the Helvellyn range which snow-capped, rugged, and wintry of aspect looks always from this particular point about double its actual altitude.

But the hounds are now loosed off, as local usage has it. The steep brown ridges of Boredale and Martindale rise before us with the far-reaching, dominating wall of the High Street filling in the background. It is a grand bit of country, with its lonely dales peopled only by sheep and red deer and the stout varminths we have come in quest of, and watered by buoyant becks which glimmer far below amid the russet-coloured waste, as they hurry down to Howtown Bay, to lose themselves in the depths of Ullswater.

Down the rough slopes of the nearest of these wild glens the whole pack, save the freshly entered puppies which Bowman keeps in couples with him, go ranging busily. There are definite and still distant points where a fox is expected to be actually lying at this time, but in the meanwhile the dogs may hit off a drag at any moment, a fact to which they seem by their actions to be sufficiently alive. They make a beautiful show in the morning sunlight, ranging in wide extended order over the bare slope of the mountain-foot; but not a whimper

comes from them as yet, and there is nothing to break the silence of the hills save the faint sound of falling water, the occasional croak perhaps of a raven, the yap of some distant sheep-dog, or the bleating of his charge. It is Comely and Stormer who first speak to a drag, away down on a green patch by the beck-side, and one after another the scattered pack from the slopes above rally to the cry. Then for a time there is a vast amount of close hunting, and a good deal of intermittent music concentrated on an acre or so of ground, where a fox has beyond any doubt been disporting himself at some time or other between this and the preceding midnight. There is a great deal of independent casting, however, many false starts, and much perplexity before they can get away on a true line. When at last, however, they hit it off there is not a touch of uncertainty in the fashion in which they stream away down the valley, slanting up the mountain-slope as they go and making the cliffs above ring with a fine burst of melody. A low headland close by, dividing two branching valleys, offers an admirable post of observation, and the old hands decide that it could not be improved on in respect to the probable line of this fox. Experience does much in keeping hounds in view in this country, but luck has something to say to it also, and on this occasion we are highly favoured. For fully three miles down the dale we can watch, with the aid of a pair of strong field-glasses, which most fox-hunters here carry, every movement of the hounds as they work out the tortuous line of their game over the rough ground. Every dog in the pack is well known, of course, to its regular followers, and their doings are eagerly watched and commented on as at a varied pace, and with frequent slight checks and

much pretty hunting, they carry the line almost to the edge of the fringe of civilisation which touches Ullswater. For a moment now they look like breasting the hill and going wrong so far as we are concerned; but fortune still befriends us and after a brief disappearance in some far-away hollows the glasses bring them into view again descending the hill-side at a most inspiring pace, and making for the beck at the bottom. Bowman in the meanwhile, with his terriers and coupled-up puppies, had pressed along the opposite ridge at that deceptive gait of his which has been the undoing of so many loud-vaunting pedestrians, and must be almost in touch with his hounds. Presently his whereabouts is most unmistakeably proclaimed, though it is not every voice would carry it in such fashion; and we know that he has viewed the fox and that the hounds have sprung him. Better still, it is soon evident that they are bringing him back to us, though on the opposite side of the glen from that down which they hunted his drag. For we just begin to hear them now, though hidden from view by a projecting shoulder of the hill along whose face they are pushing their fox at an evidently rapid rate. It is a glorious outlook in the direction on which our eyes and glasses are so eagerly fixed. Away beyond the opening of these converging glens the lower half of Ullswater gleams in the now widening sunshine. Beyond the water the rolling lowlands of Cumberland, red-tinted always amid its greys and greens, fade into distance and the misty outlines of the Scottish hills.

But no one is thinking of the back ground at this moment. Every eye is fixed on the sloping ridge of rocks out of which the fox may burst at any moment on to the smooth slope that

for nearly a mile shows its face to us so plain and so near that scarce a living thing could traverse it unseen in this clear light. It is obvious a fox could not do so, and it is almost equally certain that this one is coming out on to it. But on the russet carpet that still drapes the mountain at this season even a big dog-fox is not marked instantly by the keenest of eyes. It is not till a bunch of grey Herdwick sheep suddenly scatter, as if a shell had fallen among them, and scurry along the hill-side that we know the fox is out and find a mark, so to speak, to turn our glasses on. Then indeed the red rascal looms big enough, and one wonders at even this slight delay in finding him out. At the same moment the leading hounds come pouring out of the rocks on to the turf, a couple of hundred yards perhaps behind their quarry. And now, immediately in sight of us, and so plainly to be viewed that had we laid the trail to suit our post of observation we could not have improved upon it, an exhilarating spectacle is vouchsafed us, which is in no way lessened by the wildness and beauty of the stage upon which the game is played. At a racing pace, and both extended to their utmost powers, fox and hounds sweep across the long stretch of open turf, the former making for a waste of scree that just in front of our station breaks the smoothness of the mountain and stretches half-way up its face. For several hundred yards too the panic-stricken sheep, now further scared by the approach of the hounds, race along unconsciously in the very company of their hereditary foe, till losing their short wind or regaining their senses they suddenly open like a fan, scuttling up or down the slope with a great rattle of loose stones, and let the hounds pass through them.

Reynard has lost ground in this mile or so of fast work in the open, and now prepares to make it up again as he leaps into the rocky stretch, just below our noses and scarce a hundred yards ahead of the leading hounds. It is fine to see the hunted beast twist and turn among the boulders, and finally face the sloping cliffs that overhang them, steal up one of the gullies in their sides, and gaining the open moor above leap a six-foot wall and disappear over the brow. It is prettier still, with the exact line of the fox in one's eye, to watch these big hounds dash into the rocks and follow it out with unerring nose and the nimble action of dogs not only bred to mountain-climbing but with the blood of generations of Fell-hunting ancestors in their veins. Here, again, the work of individual hounds, so finely tested and so beautifully illustrated at close quarters, is a matter of infinite interest to the excited group of their friends above. But in such a rugged place it is inevitable that the fox should gain some ground, and it is two or three minutes after he has disappeared over the wall on the mountain brow before the leading hounds, after falling back from one or two futile attempts, clear the obstacle and vanish on his tracks.

There must always be stragglers in these mountain-packs—there neither is, nor could be any whipping-up. The very independence and self-reliance of dogs who have in a great measure to hunt themselves make the discipline and concerted action of more artificial hunting in low countries impossible. There is scarcely one of these older dogs, for instance, that has not at one time or another run and killed his fox single-handed. It is inevitable, too, that in such a country the pack should often divide on separate drags, and kill, or run to ground, separate foxes ;

nor is there any particular drawback here to such casual and unorthodox proceedings. There are no squadrons of impatient horsemen fretting for a gallop, some of them thinking perhaps, if not bold enough to say so, with the late Lord Alvanley of facetious memory, what grand sport hunting would be were it not for those damned hounds.

There are not, however, many stragglers or truants to day. The hunting has been close and fast the whole time. A solitary puppy, who has lost both his master and his companions, is seated on a high ledge of rock howling in most pathetic fashion; but the rest have all gone on, and it remains for us to follow them, and after such an easy and delightful morning it would be ill complaining of a further clamber of a few hundred feet.

When we reach the brow of the mountain we have the satisfaction of learning that we saw almost all of this admirable run that was worth seeing. In the middle of a peat-bog, just behind the topmost ridge, Bowman and a couple of farmers are standing at their ease amid the hounds, and on such a spot the sight could only mean a kill. The fox, it

seems, was harder pressed even than we thought, and for want of something better ran into a peat-hole just deep enough to give the terriers the opportunity they were doubtless chafing for. One of them, indeed, might well be reconsidering his zeal, for his head is decorated with five or six deep and bloody gashes, and his legs and shoulders bear fresh marks of honourable combat. The body of Reynard himself lies on the heather, his coat and brush soaked in black peat-mud and bearing small resemblance to the red and glossy garment he bore so bravely across the mountain sward and up the scree a short half-hour ago. These hounds, by the way, do not tear and eat their foxes, nor do they in Virginia. Once, however, in the latter country I saw a pack of hounds, who had never done such a thing in their lives before, tear up and eat a fox almost to the last mouthful under the insistent and excited appeals of a now well-known English sportsman, who, in his then youthful ardour, did not consider the termination of a fine run complete without this closing ceremony.

A. G. BRADLEY.

MEMORIES.

A stone lodge on a hill-side high,
 Beneath a vast and silent sky,
 Where billowy undulations rolled
 Of upland glebe and sombre wold.

Around it rose no mountains wild,
 Below no fairy waters smiled ;
 Yet charm imbued it, peace possest,
 You came,—you entered into rest.

A lonely home, austere fair,
 Washed by pure waves of English air,
 And reached by all the strains that ring
 From bubbling throat and beating wing ;

With just some farm-cots on the ridge,
 A drowsy brook, a mouldering bridge,
 A drover's cry, a market-wain,
 A tent-fire smoking in the lane ;

An old-world gray-white steeple seen
 Through a tall spinney's misty green,
 A waving mill, a feathered wood,—
 To blunt the edge of solitude.

Here once one lived her life serene,
 Of noble thought a stately queen,
 And with each mood of Nature grew
 Some likeness of the love we knew.

The large frank heaven that broadened there,
 The bounty of the tolerant air,
 Imaged her candid wisdom free,
 Her soul's benign regality.

In April-bloom, in morning-beam
 In the soft cadence of the stream,
 Our hearts were ever fain to find
 The grace, fire, music of her mind.

And now,—eclipse is o'er the sun,
The blossom's dainty day is done,
And in the dark of night the rill
Steals to its doom, subdued and still.

A light is lost from lawn and field,
A fount of winsome fancy sealed ;
Where matins clear rich vespers met
Aches inconsolable regret.

And her, her place remembereth not,
Her angel self is half forgot ;
The haunt of dreams in prose is drowned,
And common voices babble round.

JOSEPH TRUMAN.

THE ADVENTURE OF IGNATIUS RAM-LAL.

ALONG the banks of the Coleroon, shaded by a succession of luxuriant mango groves, the deep violet blue of the sky gradually became a bright azure towards the horizon of low hills topped by palm trees with heads like bunches of feathers. The hills, towards their summit, were of a dull yellow; but the plain which stretched to their feet on each side of the river, with its well-tilled fields of rice and maize, was clad in rich green. What with the hot sunbeams and the plentiful water, life was rampant and riotous here in the valley; but not of course without certain natural checks. The river teemed with fishes, no doubt, but crocodiles were also plentiful; and on land the over-multiplication of men and beasts was prevented by many restraining causes,—among which were tigers.

Close to the river stood the little Christian village of Dindáro, with its chapel, very like a large barn, except for a cross above one of the gable-ends, and a big bell, suspended near the porch in a framework of timber, apart from the building. Except in the great towns of Hindostan it is almost impossible for Christians to live otherwise than together; they would be despised even by pariahs. In this village Father Delacroix, a Jesuit missionary, reigned with absolute power, though in great poverty. He did not answer to the idea which for the most part leaps up in the mind at the word Jesuit; his appearance, his long grey beard, high forehead, and pale features under a sun-browned skin, gave an impression of majesty; and his handsome dress,

—something between a pope's and a cardinal's, for he wore a long white gown, a scarlet girdle, and a scarlet biretta—struck the eye by its magnificence, not out of keeping with the scenery. A Jesuit who stays in Europe may become famous as a preacher, as a writer, or as a professor; if he becomes a missionary, he sacrifices even that. Father Delacroix had long since abandoned all thought of seeing his native country again; his health, too, had given way under fifteen continuous years of the climate; there had never been any six months' leave for him, any holiday at Simla: he had broiled continuously. In return for all that he had perhaps something to look back upon, and in his opinion something to look forward to rather cheerfully. There had been much to do, and quite as much to bear. First there had been a long struggle with an excommunicated drunken priest from Goa, who lived a great deal worse than an average heathen. Then, when he set himself to root out certain vices from his people, which required the use of public penance and even of the scourge at times, as among the early Christians, there had been attempts to rebel against his authority; and some, as that authority had no physical power to back it up, very nearly succeeded. But all that was over now. He was under sixty years of age, and looked nearer eighty than seventy. But his parish had become a model of piety by that time, and, if we can credit him, a very rare model. When telling this story, he said, we remember, that from one

year's end to the other, it often happened that he had not to absolve one parishioner from a single mortal sin. Now, as they all were obliged to confess to him at least once a year, we may suppose either that they were great hypocrites, or that Father Delacroix was a great liar. These are the simplest suppositions to make, and the most pleasant. We have been Christians these fifteen centuries, and have found out that Christianity is a failure. But no matter about that. If any detail given here be not true, we have at least been quite honest about it, for we have given the source of our authority.

One afternoon Father Delacroix was standing under the porch of his bungalow close to the church, holding in his hand a small sealed packet which he seemed about to give to a young man. This was Ignatius Ram-Lal, the native sacristan, a lithe fellow with olive-brown cheeks that were only just beginning to show a little scanty down, and jet-black eyes with a sort of mystic gleam in them.

"Well, Ignatius," said the missionary, "there is no need at all for you to hurry. I should not think of sending you,—it is so terribly hot—only Father Carrere must get this to-day, you see."

"I do not feel that it is very hot, Father," replied Ignatius. "The day is indifferently warm, indeed; but it will be cool in the evening, when I return."

"But remember," continued the priest, "that provided you are here for the evening prayer and the Benediction of the Sanctissimum at eight, all will be right; you are not needed before then. Ah, by the by, tell me have you forgotten the *In Manus Tuas* that you chanted the other day so well at the rehearsal of the choristers? If not, my son, I should

wish you to sing it as an anthem this evening, after Benediction."

"Forgotten it, I! Hear me Father," said the sacristan; and he at once burst into a chant: *In Mahnoos Tooas, Domine, commendo, spiritoom may-oom*; his lungs were certainly not exerted to the utmost, and yet the result was overwhelming in volume of sound. But the Dindaro Christians had a great taste for noise, and felt their devotion roused within them when they were nearly deafened by bellowing. The Father did not like it, of course, but it was a harmless weakness, and he would not object.

"That will do, that will do," he said hurriedly. "I see you know it. You remember what it signifies, I hope?"

"Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit," rejoined the young man with gravity. "Is it not so, Father?"

"It is so. Now go; and take my blessing for the journey."

Ignatius knelt down and kissed the priest's hand; and then, having girt up his loins, he went on his way. It wound along by the riverside. To his right there stretched a long curtain of tall brushwood that hid the steep banks; but through a gap in the thickets here and there he could at times see a glimpse of the broad stream that pressed downwards with a steady ripple, and then curling into little waves tipped with foam when teased by the wind. On his left ran a long perpendicular cliff, more than a hundred feet above the road in some places, but in others much lower. The sun shone as it shines in the lowlands of the Carnatic towards the end of July; which amounts to saying that the thermometer marked intolerable heat in the shade, and out of it heat much more than intolerable. Even Ignatius

more than once wiped the sweat from his brow, remarking that the weather was warmer than he had expected.

But he gave only a passing thought to this, for his mind was running upon a very different subject. As he looked up into the dazzling blue above him, he thought of the everlasting palace which he had been taught firmly to believe in. It was somewhere there, beyond that blue abyss. Its foundations, the Father had said, were of precious stones, and its floor of pure gold; angels and archangels for ever sang, *Holy, Holy, Holy!* before the throne of God in that wonderful palace, where the air was always full of sweet sounds as of "harpers harping on their harps;" and where, above a sea of glass mingled with fire, there rises eternally, from the smoking censers swung by Seraphim, a cloud of perfumes which were the prayers of the Saints. He believed in all those things quite simply, just as he believed he had left the village of Dindāro behind him a quarter of an hour ago. And as he glanced upwards to the bright dome of the sky, he felt his heart burn with a strong desire to depart and to be with Christ. Perhaps it was something of a race-feeling, like that of the worshippers who let themselves be crushed by the wheels of Jugger-naut's car, or plunge into the Ganges to drown for their gods. It may have been; let those who like the explanation take it for what it is worth. At all events, he knew that any thought of such an ending was a sin. Yet that beautiful Heaven, though the very thought of it brought tears to his eyes and a longing desire to his heart, might never be his. He might fall away from the good path, die in sin, and be lost. He was in God's grace, he felt it; it was but a few days since he had taken the Holy Eucharist. But he remembered

too how that very day, the Father's voice had rung through the church with a warning, perhaps meant for him, "Beware of backsliding!" If he died now, he would assuredly go to Heaven; but what hope was there of dying now? Martyrdom was an idle dream; under British rule, the heathen were too quiet for that. They asked only to be left unmolested; and Father Delacroix (somewhat unaccountably, in the opinion of Ignatius, whose zeal was fierce) suffered no one to molest them. Some weeks before he had rated the sacristan soundly for misnaming a family of evil-eyed pagans, who were passing through the village, children of the devil.

But what if he were to die by an accident now, now, in the very act of doing his duty and serving the Church? What, for instance, if a cobra were to dart out of the long grass and bite him? The idea had such power on his imagination that he thought he felt the sharp tooth striking at his naked ankle. That would insure Heaven, after a short sojourn in the place of purification, a sojourn rendered still shorter by what he would suffer. Oh if it could but come to pass! So thought Ignatius, very foolishly, if you like, and he again glanced up to the violet-blue sky, that glowed like the great eye of God, full of love, and drawing his soul on high with ecstasy.

As he looked down again, his attention was attracted to the cliff before him, on the top of which he could see two rocks close together. There were not, so far as he could remember, two rocks when he last went that way. One, the larger of the two, seemed partly to hide and shade the other, which bore a curious likeness to a tiger on the spring. A few steps nearer, in spite of his faith and his wish to die, he started, and his olive-

brown face became livid. What he had seen was no rock, but a real tiger, on the prowl in full daylight,—a very rare occurrence; no doubt it was the man-eater that had wandered from Mirapul on the hills, where it found little prey. It was evidently watching him. He could see its striped loins, undulating and rolling slowly, now forward, now sideways, its tail waving in the air, its ears set back viciously, and its shining eyes. But the brute, more than a hundred feet above him, did not care to try such a desperate leap. It knew better how to calculate distances, and only followed Ignatius, skulking above the cliff as he went along, quite himself again after the first shock, thanking God that the hour was come, making his act of contrition, and looking up at the azure eye which looked down upon him with serene love.

So far as any attempt to escape the danger could be made, the young man was aware that it was his duty to make it; the ignorant barbarian knew little more than his catechism, but he knew it well. He saw, however, that his case was hopeless. A band of travellers might pass that way, but it was not a high road and the chance was slight. He was by that time about midway between Dindâro and Father Carrere's village, and the nearer he drew to the latter the lower and the less perpendicular became the cliff. This, sooner or later, meant death; but if he went back it was the same, and he chose therefore to die going forward and doing his duty. Yet as he walked on at the same pace as before, he saw the end of his journey,—the tiger standing over his dying body, growling as it crunched his ribs or gnawed at the flesh of his arm or tore him open with its claws; and all this he saw so vividly that the sweat burst out in big cold drops all over him. But again, that was only

for a moment. It would soon be over, and his soul would cross that threshold of sapphire so far away now, and would hear the sound of St. Peter's key turning in the lock. It was very well, and he could wish for nothing better.

There was a falling, crashing noise behind him, and, looking round, he saw the tiger in the air. Three or four rocks, projecting from the side of the cliff, were near enough to each other for the beast to shoot down obliquely in a few leaps; and there it was upon the road, not very far from Ignatius in whom, not the love of life, but the fear of pain was struggling with his desire for Heaven. Being a Christian, it followed in his mind that he could not doubt the infinite joys which awaited him in the next world. No earthly pleasures were even a shadow of them; so the Father had told him positively. So, without any pang of regret for the life that would be gone in a few minutes, he had freely given up everything in this world. But his soft Hindoo nature was as weak as his faith was strong, and he shuddered at the thought of the bitterness of that short passage, of the mangling teeth and claws; and even now he quailed as he fancied that he heard a stealthy tread making ready for one long leap, and a horrible rustling in the rank grass. These feelings, which at the same time worked on the strongest and on the feeblest part of his character, made of him a strange compound of abject fear and of enthusiastic courage, trembling at what he desired above all things.

The tiger crept on, crouching, crawling, gliding, with a snake-like movement of its long body, which made its orange streaks flicker like flames; poisoning itself as if for a spring, then changing its mind and approaching still nearer with a short

run, so as to make the last bound quite sure ; stealing along by the river-side, through the high clumps of brushwood, below the long ridge of a hillock, behind the trunks and among the gnarled roots of some big trees ; infinitely cautious, absorbed in the chase, and no doubt unaware that the man knew of his danger. Its white teeth gleamed in the bushes.

During several minutes poor Ignatius, still walking on at his usual pace, suffered agony. At last he felt that he could bear it no longer ; he was wrought to a degree of excitement that was nearly madness ; he would end this intolerable torture. His life was lost ; nothing could save him ; so he would offer it up to the Lord by boldly rushing at the tiger, and dying in its jaws. Turning abruptly round, he saw it about twenty paces from him, at the foot of a large tree, gathering itself together for the leap. A gap in the leafy curtain along the river showed him the water flowing just below, sparkling with swimming creatures. The yellow eyes of the tiger gleamed with rage at the sight of the man that faced it, and could not be taken by surprise. It was too horrible ! Ignatius shut his eyes and dashed forwards, throwing up his arms, and bellowing forth with all his might,—louder than he had ever sung at the greatest festival, when his voice drowned the notes of the native trombone—the anthem he

was to have chanted that evening at church.

"In Mancoos Tocas, Domine, Com-mendo spiritoom may-oom !"

It was wild and hoarse with dread, yet triumphant also, that death-song of his, which roared in the air and re-echoed from the cliff, as he rushed forward in darkness. He was almost beside himself, and deafened by the sound of his own voice, yet he thought he heard a harsh hiss like a frightened cat that spits, a low howl, and a splash ; but at that instant a great blow on his head felled him and he became senseless.

It was not the tearing of the tiger's claws, however, that brought him to his senses again ; and he did not see the gate of Paradise nor hear the key turn in the lock. A few moments afterwards he sat up, bleeding. He had struck his head with force against the tree in his blind rush ; and now he looked round, smarting, dazed, but not much hurt. No tiger was to be seen anywhere ; and clearly, Heaven was not for Ignatius yet awhile. There was a tumultuous noise in the river beneath. Two crocodiles were busily engaged over something which they were dragging to and fro under the water, now and then beating the surface with their tails. A crimson tinge in the ripples of the stream, which at the same time reflected the blue of the sky, formed a chequered and moving pattern.

SIR WILLIAM NAPIER.

THE common consent of mankind, which judges without appeal, has assigned Sir William Napier his place among writers of the English language. He is "the most eloquent of military historians." Nor is there any implied irony behind the description such as we are conscious was in his own mind when he said that Don Gaspar Jove Llanos was "a very eloquent person." There is no mere rush of fine language in Napier's style, not even when he was at his worst in those later books written years after he had finished his great history, and for the purpose of defending his brother Sir Charles. There were prejudice, animosity, the love of controversy carried to the point where it became maniacal, and a fixed, though doubtless unconscious, determination to think and say the worst of all opponents. Vices of this order weaken his worth as an advocate, and disqualify him at times as a judge. They once at least misled him into an error unworthy, not only of a gentleman, but of common decency,—and not seldom they took him to the very verge of deliberate untruth. There is a degree of partisanship separated from pure mendacity by an interval so fine that it would test the art of the most accomplished casuist to put a knife-blade between them. Napier reached it; but in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of his passion his style remained intact. And that style, happily for us, was not wasted on overgrown pamphlets which have sunk into the turbid swamp of Anglo-Indian controversy, or on endless

letters to *THE TIMES* in answer to Mr. Bright and Mr. Cobden. It was employed in one happy interval in telling the story of a heroic passage in our history,—the only true account of it according to the Duke of Wellington. For once the occasion fitted the virtue, the matter was worthy of the form, and *THE HISTORY OF THE WAR IN THE PENINSULA AND THE SOUTH OF FRANCE* remains a great English classic. Because *THE CONQUEST OF SCINDE* and *THE LIFE OF SIR CHARLES NAPIER* are the work of the same author they can still be read, wearisome as they are by their uncooling heat of controversy, their monotonous blare of apologetic, or less apologetic than panegyric rage.

All, however, is not said about Napier's masterpiece when we agree with the world that it is eloquent, or accept the Duke's verdict as to its accuracy. The eloquence, though perfectly genuine, is also individual, and heady enough to be misleading. The accuracy must be understood with the limitation that it is occasionally confined to the soundness of the reasoning on military principles, and to the indispensable, but mechanical precision of the details of numbers, names, and the movements of troops. Subtle influences, professional, personal, and political, are at work in the mind of the writer. It is always necessary to remember that we hear the words of a man with a vehement character, and a budget of faiths not always compatible with one another, and always the offspring rather of emotion than of reasoning. There is no

writer to whom it is more necessary to apply Sainte-Beuve's doctrine of the environment, or whom it is more unsafe to trust when he is dealing with those men who were near his heart, or those things which appealed to his eager affections. The necessary preliminary to a sound appreciation of his work is a knowledge of the man.

The active life of Sir William Napier, apart from his writing, is not indeed important. He served as a soldier gallantly, ably, and with his full share of wounds; but he did no more than hundreds of others, and less than Shaw Kennedy or Colborne. He held no great commands, and his governorship of the Channel Islands was little more than a formal office. His brother Sir George held a greater place at the Cape, and with a chance to make his mark on Colonial history. Ill health, the result of his wounds, account partly for his want of promotion and employment; yet his restless activity is a proof that the bullet at Casal Nova would not have crippled him. He was left to find a relief from idleness in sculpture and literature, because he had early impressed the authorities with the conviction that he was not a safe man, the worst of all qualities in the eyes of responsible official people. Nor were they proved to be entirely wrong when he was at last, in 1841, named Governor of Guernsey.

It is a radical defect of Napier's character that, being above all things vehement, he was a double-minded man. Democratic and humanitarian sentiments were combined in him with all the instincts of an aristocrat. To the latter he had every right by birth. His father, who left an honourable record of himself by introducing honesty and order into the fraudulent chaos of the Irish military accounts, came of the ancient stock of the

Napiers of Merchiestoun. His mother was the Lady Sarah Lennox who, as some have thought, might have been George the Third's queen. How she left a negligent first husband with a lover, how she then realised the essential squalor of that position and returned to her family, and how, in spite of this strange passage in her life, she remained a woman of sense and worth, may be read in her recently published letters. He was born in Ireland at Celbridge in 1785 and grew up amid the manifold misery of the last years of the eighteenth century. The rebellion of 1798 occurred when he was a boy of twelve. The house was attacked by a party of rebels in search of arms, and was intrepidly held by his father as a garrison. It was young Napier's first experience of military service. The spectacle put before him in those years could not but impress a lad whose disposition was generous and pitiful, and had inherited a full share of the sensibility of the eighteenth century. Wherever he had been born, and had passed his boyhood, his opinions would no doubt have been the same; yet they may well have gained a fiercer intensity from his first experiences. The state of Ireland and of the poorer Irish accounts for some part of his intense sympathy with the sufferings of the people, and his boundless scorn for the ineptitude of their callous rulers everywhere. And these convictions had their dwelling in one who was singularly disposed to believe that he did well to be angry. Mr. Bruce, afterwards Lord Aberdare, his son-in-law and biographer, has described his career "as remarkable for its enthusiastic worship of everything good and noble, and for its detestation of everything mean, cruel, or crafty." The praise is unqualified, as was fitting in the case of the writer, but we may

limit it, and are helped in the work of criticism by a frank concession of Lord Aberdare's. In another passage of the life he confesses that when Napier thought he saw cruelty and tyranny he was not punctilious in examining the evidence. Like other men who are swayed mainly by their emotions he was apt to make "This is mean because I hate it," take the place of "I hate this because it is mean." He detested oppression, and therefore was prone to believe every tale told against the presumed oppressor.

By the side of his tender pity for the people, and of his frequent and loud proclamation of its essential to virtue, is a wholly different set of sentiments. From the moment that he is called upon to deal with his fellow men, and with business, he becomes a thorough aristocrat. Nothing indeed could be more consistent with his birth and position. Not only was he by descent a gentleman, but he owed his early entry into the army and his chances of distinction to that very corrupt aristocratic influence he denounces in fifty passages of the History. He was entered in the Irish artillery at the age of twelve, transferred to the 62nd, and, when that regiment was disbanded at the Peace of Amiens, put into the Blues, from which he passed to be captain in the 43rd over the heads of subalterns twenty years older than himself, for no other reason than because he was the grandson of the Duke of Richmond. That he was an excellent officer is true, and that the subalterns of the 43rd were then what he calls them, "mean shop boys," is credible; but how does this tell against the "aristocratic influence," and how are we to reconcile the use of the name of one useful portion of the sacred people as a term of contempt with his democratic sentiments?

Napier made no attempt at reconciliation. He spoke as the mood took him. Pen in hand, and with the British Army as an abstraction before him, he recorded the depressed fate of the British soldier who fights "in the cold shade of the Aristocracy." With the concrete question who ought to be officers in that army to answer he is convinced that the gentleman alone is fit. The first voice comes from the emotional theorist who holds for the equality of mankind in the abstract; the second gives the genuine conviction bred in the bone of William Francis Napier, whose ancestors had sometimes been kings, more frequently nobles, but always gentlemen.

Which of the two conflicting elements of his character was prevalent for the moment was violently expressed, for he was by nature a striker. Few soldiers, and perhaps no man of letters, contrived to be the hero of more stories of assault and battery. In the South of France he nearly drowned a brutal muleteer, who was ill-treating his beast, in a puddle of mud. He rode down and beat a Frenchman who called him a "sacred beefstik" in Paris in 1823, though he was with Lady Frances Harvey at the time and put her in a most unpleasant position. When his deaf and dumb son was roughly handled by a gamekeeper he thrashed the man savagely. An ill-advised person, who called him a liar on a platform, was knocked down. In no case was Napier purely the aggressor; he was at the worst only excessive. Even the gamekeeper had some excuse, for he had a master to obey, and had reason to think that the boy was poaching. The platform incident is useful, for it may serve to excuse the little that need be said of Napier's politics.

Essentially they were those of

Colonel Newcome dwelling in a combative heart. Napier avowed his love of a dispute. He thought that the poor ought to be well treated, but that they ought to show him the respect he had received from the men of his regiment. So long as he looked at their cause as a generality, and through a haze of sentiment, he spoke very strongly indeed, and it was his fiery talk which led indirectly to his chastisement of the rude interrupter. He was engaged in denouncing the Whigs for their coercion of Ireland, and was maintaining that they were debarred from the use of force against the people, because they had been prepared to apply it in order to carry the Reform Bill, and had invited him to lead their proposed national guard. Now this was part of the truth, but not the whole. What had happened was that a few of the reformers, who were Whigs and something more, the section of them headed by Erskine Perry and Charles Buller, did invite him to become their soldier. There is no evidence that they had the authority of the great Whig leaders. Nor is this all. Whoever reads his answer to the offer, honestly published by Lord Aberdare, must see that Napier did not decline because he had any objection of principle to play the part of "leader in civil strife." His reasons were that he was not to be allowed to have a voice in the governing council of the party, for his correspondents had told him with placid priggery that he was to be a mere sword; that he was poor and had a wife, and six children to support; that the movement was not sufficiently organised to have a chance of success; and that his health was bad. There was yet another, and a truly exquisite reason. Napier pointed out that a partial rising would certainly fail, and that a general movement of the

English people would be headed by their natural leaders, the men of wealth and position who would not tolerate being commanded by him. There was excellent sense in all this, and sound prudence; but it did not come very well from a man who had undeniably written and spoken as if he was ready to risk all for the sacred cause of the people. His correspondents and he had good ground to be thankful that their lot was cast in a stable State. In revolutionary France Napier, after helping to bring revolution about, might very well have ended on the guillotine, or before a firing party, at the orders of some Gallic orator Hunt as a traitor to the cause, while Erskine Perry, and Buller would have had the satisfaction of singing the Marseillaise on their way to the scaffold under the direction of the Jacobins.

In short his judgment swerved hither and thither according as he was for the moment the theoretical democrat, the born gentleman whose instincts revolted against the claim to equality on the part of his inferiors, the affectionate husband and father (in those relations he appears to us as faultless), the professional soldier, the controversialist, or the man of generous feeling. In the Peninsula he avowed his hatred of his trade of "licensed murderer." When peace and a quiet time on half-pay came, he looked back, and the life of the soldier seemed to him one of devoted heroic grandeur and the noblest of all lives. In 1807 he roundly called the British soldiers scoundrels who repaid the kindness of the Danish country people by murder and robbery; he drew another picture in his *History*. He abounded in praise of the natural nobility of the people, and scornfully refused to lead a mob against the British army and the

Duke of Wellington. In the heat of debate he blurted out the piously concealed truth that Outram's brother had died by his own hand, and so drew upon himself the terrible reproach of the mother. He accused Perceval of refusing to allow quinine to be imported into France from mere cruelty, and of encouraging plots to murder Napoleon; yet a friend reports that he would throw himself on the ground overwhelmed with tears at the mere thought that he had wronged any one. Indeed no mediæval saint had a greater measure of the gift of tears. He wept for hours on hearing of the death of Napoleon. And here it is to be remarked that we pass for cold, and are proud of a supposed manly superiority to sentiment. But some of our strongest have been sentimentalists and weepers. Nelson was, and William Napier, and many another of their hard fighting generation. It is at least a tenable proposition that we are the most sentimental people in the world, as Disraeli is said to have called us.

Given now such a man as this, how should we expect to find that his character had influenced his work as an historian? Our first calculation would be that his politics would be emotional, and that his judgments would be influenced by personal and doctrinal likings and dislikings. And so it is. To his honour be it said the humanities were with him immortal. He never forgot, or failed to repay kindness. Every one who has read his great History must have noticed that the only Spaniard he always praises, and even goes out of his way to praise, is the Commissioner of the Cortes at Wellington's headquarters, Miguel de Alava. Now Alava, with certain touches of littleness, was brave, able, and upright. Napier would always have recognised

his qualities, but he did so abundantly and with joy, because of a little incident which happened at Celorico after Talavera, and is told by George Napier. William, and his dearest friend Lloyd who afterwards fell at the Petite Rhune, were brought into the town sick in a bullock-waggon. The waggoner had no billet for them, and while he was hunting for one left them under a blazing sun in the market-place. Staff-officers passed them indifferently, and no surgeon among their countrymen came near them. Alava, who saw their position, took them into his quarters, and treated them with ample hospitality. Therefore he never appears except to his credit, and no gallant action of his is passed over; and that is to the honour of Napier.

So much cannot quite be said of his treatment of the two great objects of his affection, Moore who was his protecting friend, and Napoleon who was his idol. No motive for writing his History was stronger with Napier than the desire to vindicate the memory of Moore. We know with what passion, what eloquence, and what an impressive show of closely marshalled evidence he discharged this pious duty in the sixth chapter of his fourth book. We are carried away, and reach the last line with a conviction that the English general was not only right to retreat to the sea, but had no other course open to him than to prepare to embark at Corunna. Then a little further we reach the fourth chapter of the sixth book, and find the Spaniards blamed, justly enough, for surrendering that town and Ferrol. They had "honourably maintained their town [Corunna] until the fleet conveying Moore's army was gone. They were less faithful to their own cause." The French had no battering-train, and could not have collected one for weeks. A

siege would have occupied thirty thousand men for months before two regular fortresses. Very good, but what then becomes of the apology for Sir John Moore? Surely he could have held the towns, and his much tried army would have been far better employed in occupying thirty thousand men for months than in suffering the extremity of sea-sickness in a winter passage across the Bay of Biscay. As for Napier's plea that the army would have been in a corner at Corunna, the Duke was in a corner at Torres Vedras, and from it he began the re-conquest of the Peninsula. Besides, why should Moore have remained mewed up in the town? He beat the French outside Corunna. If he had not more men to turn upon Soult it was his own fault, for he had written for empty transports and not for the reinforcements which would have been sent if they had been asked for.

The defence of Moore was closely allied with the idolatry of Napoleon. When we come to this, reason and argument are out of place. Nitsche has explored a region in morals which is "on the other side of good and evil;" when Napoleon was concerned Napier travelled into an inane space on the other side of sense and evidence. In 1816 he could write gravely that Bonaparte was "the only support of real freedom in Europe." No covenant on the watch for the working of the enemy of mankind ever saw a wilder vision. How it came to dwell in his mind is a problem not difficult to solve. His father had taught him early in life to detest Pitt's policy of resistance to the revolutionary influence of France. He took for granted that we, and not, as was the fact, the French, were the aggressors. Fox, who was his kinsman, taught him to admire Napoleon, and the soldier's

admiration of the successful general did the rest. As his Whiggism gave place to a sentimental love for democracy, his adoration for Napoleon grew till he shaped for himself a fantastic image of a child of democracy who was fighting for the freedom of the people. He absolutely believed that the attempt to seize Spain in 1808 was due to a generous wish to improve the lot of the Spaniards. Their opposition to their benefactor, and their besotted loyalty to a despotic king and bigoted clergy moved his scornful impatience. Professional feeling had its influence, and he burned to show that the whole merit of the expulsion of the French was entirely due to the British army. Between the two he literally could not be fair to our allies. He weighs heavily and with zest and contempt on all their faults, which indeed were many. Just as he accused Perceval of plotting to murder Napoleon because he disliked the minister's politics, so, because he despised the Spaniards and chiefly those of the nobility, he accused Palafox of concealing himself, with women and wine, in a bomb-proof casement during the siege of Saragossa—with as much evidence in one case as in the other. He endeavoured to belittle the heroism of the Arragonese by recording that a gallows was put up in the town as a warning to cowards, forgetting that he himself fought under a code which punished cowardice with death. That gallows was the outward and visible sign to all men that the Arragonese leaders knew the need for discipline, and meant to enforce it. He could not recognise that the national resistance of Spain occupied at all times four-fifths of the French army, and was the one condition which made our stay in the Peninsula possible. Whoever had asked him to admire

the Spaniards for setting Europe an example of a national resistance, and for helping to send the child of democracy and the greatest man of all time to St. Helena would have been ill received. To point out that Napoleon was on his own confession conquering England in Europe, and that Spain gave us the only battlefield in which our small army could act in our own defence would have been to provoke a tirade, wherein "aristocratic principle," "mean and low minds," "puerility" "the noble and lofty" would have been mingled in eloquent profusion. If to wish your country success, to believe her right, and to long for the confusion of her enemies is to be a patriot, then Napier was none, for his heart was with Napoleon, and he held his country to be in the wrong.

The courteous reader may perhaps now ask, what is left to Napier? What is left is the opportunity to be right in three parts out of four in his great History, and the glory of having written the noblest style ever applied to the description of war. He was not always apologising for Moore with the unconscious sophistry of passion. Napoleon was not always in his mind. Often he was right about the Spaniards, for there is a wild vapoury element in their character, and in the anarchy of those years, the combined result of long internal stagnant corruption and of foreign attack, all the evil things came to the surface. When he had to consider the causes of success and defeat his intellect could work in a dry light. His exposition of the circumstances surrounding Massena's invasion of Portugal is an admirable example how to take a survey of the great bearings and the intellectual side of war. Then he had an innate respect for manhood, and could be just to it even

in a Spanish guerrillero. He could allow that Julian Sanchez was brave and honest, and that Mina was indomitable in recovering from defeat, fertile in resource, and had a good faculty for organisation. It is true that he could not forgive our allies for advancing claims which conflicted with our pretensions to have been the sole authors of the expulsion of the French. Praise came from him with an effort, in lively contrast with his manifest pleasure in bestowing blame; but it came. He had an ever present sense of all that is heroic in war, and of the lofty moral elements of the soldier's trade. The troops who fight and suffer, fail or conquer, sin, and atone for sin by devoting themselves to death that a post may be held or a height stormed, are no mere dummies on his page. They live and breathe as real as the characters of the highest romance or drama. He felt their humanity with the intuition of a poet. He saw their actions and the scene of their actions with the eye of a painter. He described them as a man of letters, conscious, perhaps unknowingly and by sound literary instinct, but thoroughly conscious none the less of the limitations of the writer's art. It is always through action, the emotion of the actor and the answering emotion of a spectator, never in vain efforts to do the pencil's work with the pen, that his picture is drawn.

Then there is the style, the actual way of saying things. In these days it is currently reported that people do not read books in six volumes octavo, and still less in four volumes quarto. The report may be believed, and if it is true then Napier is known to most readers only by extracts of the purple patches. In other words he is not known at all. Take his history of the Peninsular War as a whole, and it is chiefly marked

by the power to tell rapid and strenuous action in simple words. His main defect as a writer, the want of humour, frankly confessed by himself, is not felt, where the subject does not lend itself to light treatment. The soldier who is marching into the jaws of death may jest defiantly; but there is no place for jocularity in an account of men slaying and being slain, of the miseries of women and children, and the burning of cities. Now and then one feels that Napier would have escaped coasting absurdity if he had been more conscious of the ridiculous. He would, for instance, not have displayed so much horror at the ferocity of the cura Merino. This clerical guerrillero who infested the main road from Burgos to Madrid, being fiercely angry when some of his followers were shot as brigands by a French general, retaliated by shooting a number of French prisoners of war, and informing his opponent that the remainder would be kept as a deposit and drawn on as occasion served. Napier seems to have felt that the shooting of civilians by soldiers was a sad but correct necessity, while the shooting of soldiers by civilians was an outrage. But he is never trivial, and he is commonly very simple. Take, for example, the scene on the battle-field of Fuentes de Oñoro, or the passage of the Douro. There is hardly a word in the second which might not have been written in a despatch, and little in the first, save the few sentences which tell the story of Norman Ramsay's guns. Yet they are eloquent for they are burning with life,

and they carry us into the midst of a furious clash of competing energies. No writer, no poet even, was a greater master of the simple, sensuous, and passionate image. He did not fear a common one, but would take it, and let it be carried on by the current of his style. In this very case of Norman Ramsay's guns he did not hesitate to say that the horses were stretched like greyhounds on the plain, — one of the oldest of similes. But he could also take the common and make it uncommon. "The multitudinous French squadrons closed round the glowing square," is but the well-worn image of the waves and the rocks made new, and by the force of two adjectives put in their place it is a picture. At times he abounded, and repeated himself. The vice grew with years; but the magnitude and the pressure of the subject in his History compelled him to compress. When the time came for the purple patch, it was not put on. The glow of the passion in the writer expressed itself in burning words. Having brought the Duke from Portugal to the valley of Vitoria he rises spontaneously to the enthusiastic chant beginning, "Such an art is war," at the contemplation of this triumph of effort and calculation. Sir Edward Cecil, Burleigh's son, said that war is the greatest of the arts God had given it to man to know, for had He not called Himself the God of battles? It is Napier's claim to a foremost place among writers that he found fit words for the declaration of this faith.

DAVID HANNAY.

THE DISPOSERS OF BIRD-LIFE.

THE bird-loving Briton has for some time been doubting whether the best way of expressing his love is to kill its object. He rather wishes that the rare bird would cease to insist on his prerogative of being shot. He wonders whether it may be pleasanter, if less profitable, to study the ways of the bird in the bush than the anatomy or plumage of the one in hand. He even dreams, that, before man can attain to the highest civilisation, he must revert a long way towards the friendship with animals of his primal innocence.

The Society for the Protection of Birds has now, for about ten years, been fostering these doubts and desires, and endowing these dreams with reality. It has held up to ridicule the model wife and mother, who goes to church with an aigrette in her bonnet that she may help to convert the bird-adoring Hindoos. It has pointed out all sorts of inconsistencies in the treatment by farmers and gardeners of pigeons in the corn-fields and thrushes among the cabbages. It has also got the law on its side; and promises to draw it into yet closer alliance. It regrets, however, that a House, which put Mr. Bigwood's bill for consolidating and amending the Protection Acts to bed in July, 1900, seems likely to let it oversleep itself well after May-morning, 1902. It thinks the laws of trespass want repairing (gipsies have long ago driven their vans and four through them), so that bird-catchers may yet become numerically as great skuas, if not great auks.

There are other classes that regard the Protection Laws as "sickly sentimentalism," or as among the treasures of the statute-book; but only one class is practically independent of them. The game-preserved, with his agents, has important exemptions under the Acts; yet, for practical purposes, he might almost as well have been exempted altogether.

If you want to know how this is, ask the rural policeman. In the days when the dog-owner had three votes in three counties, and would transfer them to the opposition, "unless the Minister of Agriculture immediately" etc., there were maiden ladies who could not torture their darling Yorkshire-terriers with muzzles, but always put them into their muffs when they saw a policeman coming. But when the policeman did come, he was wearing a cap and shooting-coat, instead of his uniform; and he was wheeling a perambulator with a baby in it. It was embarrassing to be summoned by so fond a father, if uxorious husband.

In those days when, with a large proportion of womankind (not necessarily in petticoats) the encouragement of hydrophobia was the first duty of a government, the noble owner of fifty thousand acres and poor Hodge, his tenant at eighteenpence a week and by present profession owner of a suspected lurcher, used to pay the same fine at the same Petty Sessions. For those were the days when the independence and efficiency of the rural police were not (if we may believe convicted lady, nobleman, and labourer) their own rewards. Suppose these convicts to

be talking, if with sore hearts, by the book; suppose also bird-protecting to be as profitable as dog-suppressing, and a policeman manœuvring to surround a keeper or his master on a property of, say, three thousand acres. The man who is to be surrounded may be armed with glasses as well as a fowling-piece; and he moves on interior lines, with plenty of cover. *Bang!* was that a rabbit, rat, stoat, or weasel? Or was it a kestrel or owl or other bird protected even from the agent of the occupier? *Bang!* *bang!* the surrounder may wear a cap and shooting-coat; he may be armed with two babies and a double perambulator, or even a covered cart; but he would have just as good a chance of seeing through a hundred yards of oak trees and hazel underwood, or three feet of whitethorn in full leaf, if he was in his parade-equipment.

It is no use, my friend. You had much better seek promotion from the swiftness of the motor-car or the slowness of the gipsy-van, and leave the perambulator to your wife. It is not your weakness if the arm of the law is deficient in muscle. And, when all is said and done, who and what is the game-preserver? Does he exercise such a terribly malign influence on bird-life in general? Does he always do his best to kill every bird that ought to, and a good many that cannot kill his game? At his worst, may he not be a blessing in disguise?

To begin with the preserver of the biggest of British game, it is a condition of his sport that it fosters some of the biggest of British birds. The Highland chieftain, even if he does not protect the golden eagle for its own sake, at least is not sorry to use it, with the peregrine falcon and the raven, to keep down the illegitimate game in the forest.

As easily as a startled grouse may spoil a stalk, does a man with a dog

and gun secure a blank draw in a hunting country. But if in South Leicestershire there are more magpies than partridges, the case is rather that of the game-preserver non-existent, than, as with the Highlander, in *excelsis*.

Of the common preserver, the very widely diffused entertainer of himself and his friends, and often the rival of his neighbours, there are at least three varieties. Some of us are privileged to know the man who loves "not sport the less, but Nature more," who has stalked the bighorn, or his top-story neighbour, the Rocky Mountain goat, and, with one horizontal foot for standing and a hundred perpendicular yards for falling, has foregone a shot at short range for the sake of a long look at a family party. In the woods of such a man as this there is no keeper's larder. That, says the cynic, is because there is a keeper's cemetery; but if so, it is badly filled. A master, who loves the nesting-time less for the sake of his hand-reared pheasants than of those true children of Nature that afford endless entertainment to his eyes and ears, is himself the guardian of the kestrel's nest in the gouty oak, the hobby's on the top of the tall beech, and the favourite trees of the owls, white and tawny. He tempers justice with mercy in the case of the crows in the Scotch fir, the magpies among the thorn-trees on the downs, the jays in the thickest bushes of the old wood, and the sparrow-hawks among the larches. And if he has a keeper who, besides a ready finger on the trigger, has hands that stray towards nests, it is as well that the two eggs of the nightjar, among the bracken at the edge of the ride, should be personally supervised, the touchwood beech where the greater spotted-woodpecker drums, and the outwardly sound oak of the yaffle. But if the keeper is a wise

man and a loyal, he identifies himself with his master's tastes, and admits that, where there are more kestrels and owls there are fewer rats, and where there are fewer rats there are more partridges. In the hands of such a sportsman as this the balance of bird-life is evenly maintained. He does not allow the sparrows to evict the house-martins, or the crows the rooks (themselves in fair proportion). And when the same bird is at different seasons a destroyer of insects and an eater of grain and seed, he will turn his knowledge of its habits to account.

A far commoner type of shooting owner or tenant is one who has no more than the Nature-serving sportsman to learn from the cleverest of keepers as to how woods ought to be beaten and fields driven, but regards hawks, jays, magpies, jackdaws, rooks, and crows as a Boxer regards missionaries. Shooting is to him less a recreation than a feverish competition, on the success of which he stakes his happiness, and with his happiness that of his friends and relations. If he fails, on his best day, to kill a thousand and one head to his neighbour's best of a thousand, he may retire to his club for the rest of the shooting-season, or even to the Riviera. A first-rate shot himself, he cannot afford to have bad shots among his assistant poulterers. But hardly more gladly than a bad shot does he suffer the man who, in the grouse or partridge drive, when a half educated young merlin or kestrel glides slowly over him, can shoot and won't. Himself a cool man, he is never more excited than when a jay dips and jerks forward towards the corner of the wood. It is too low now for safe shooting; but only let it wait in the corner, and even the chance of its death meaning life to that thousand and first pheasant

shall not save it. What happens at breeding-time on this sportsman's land may not be quite according to the spirit, if it is to the letter, of the Wild Birds Protection Acts. He is on the Bench, perhaps, and has spoken his mind to bird-catchers, not because he objects to their trade, but because he suspects their influence on his sport. Does he know what the law is? No; but the magistrates' clerk does. And he will very likely add, as a good joke, that, if his keeper be unlearned in the law, his ignorance is his master's bliss. At any rate, the keeper rejoices, more or less openly, over his bag of kestrels and owls, while he laments the growing plague of rats. So might the Home Secretary, who had accomplished a general massacre of policemen, view from his club-windows, with more surprise than pain, a triumphal procession of burglars.

Yet another sportsman is the modern Mr. Briggs, or the highly modernised and toned-down Mr. Winkle. The keeper, included in whose knowledge of his art is his master's ignorance of it, has no intention of giving the guests an opportunity of saying to their host: "It must be rather against your pheasants having so many jays in the wood;" or, "I saw two magpies in that last drive, two too many for your partridges, eh?" or, "I wonder you've a single grouse left. There were actually four hawks (blue hawks, the keeper called them; and that parson, who thinks he knows something about birds, called them merlins) came over my butt, out of shot, of course." Keepers deprecate such naturalists as these, when they serve a tenant of well-stocked preserves who, without knowing in the flesh a sparrow-hawk from a missel-thrush, perhaps has a vision of the male kestrel, without an effort, carrying the cock-pheasant.

The two last examples of the game-preserver may not sound synonymous with the bird-protector ; yet, there may be no more effective guardians of all but larger bird-life than the most ignorant of its general lore, the most indifferent to all but the interests of game-birds and wild-fowl. For it is the most rampant preserver's keeper that most securely protects from the village schoolboy the nightingale's nest among the hazel-stubs, the long-tailed tit's in the gorse-bushes, and hundreds of other dwellings hardly inferior in beauty and associations. He is, if unconsciously, an *impressario* of England's unrivalled bird-opera : and if his woods and fields are hard enough of access, to climb the shattered wych-elms in the park of the universal bird-lover, where white owls, jackdaws, and stock-doves nest, is only to be attempted by starvelings,

with "dimensions to any thick sight invisible."

If sport has always been above the law, fashion, with the sale of feathers not yet regulated, is still outside it. But the woman who wears birds and bits of bird may tire of aboriginal fashions. An apostle of the anti-feather league may quicken her indifference into sentiment ; then, perhaps, she stays with a new owner of old-established shooting, one who yesterday was content with ping-pong and lemonade at Upper Tooting. To-day he presses eighty-nine champagne on Royalty and Serenity at lunch, and declines it himself, on the ground of shooter's headache, at dinner. The lady convert is sitting next him. Has he ever heard of the Society for the Protection of Birds ! Never ; but before long the Society has heard of and appreciated him as a liberal and active supporter.

THE SOUFFRIERE OF ST. VINCENT.

THE appalling catastrophe in Martinique has drawn all eyes for the moment to those lovely islands which rise from the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea. Strange, indeed, and violent are the contrasts which meet us in that magic land. It has been my lot to pass several years of my life among those scenes of beauty, wonder, and terror. One whole night I sat and "outwatched the Bear" on a lofty peak in Dominica. Two weeks I lay down to sleep every night on the brink of that awful crater which now vomits fire and ruin over the fair fields of St. Vincent. Not soon to be forgotten are the six days which I passed on the deck of a schooner, beating painfully to windward from St. Vincent to Barbados. One wild gallop I had on the sands of Tobago, where Crusoe gazed in horror at that solitary footprint. I can vividly remember the bustling streets and gay crowds in the hotels of St. Pierre, which now lies a heap of smoking ruins, with thirty thousand charred and battered corpses buried beneath them. I have tried, in the pages which follow, to gather into one focus the scattered reminiscences of several years. If the lighter and gayer side of West Indian life comes uppermost in this description, the reader will not be likely, after the horrors of the last few weeks, to forget the darker aspects of the picture. We have read, and are likely to read more, of such scenes of woe and despair as are hardly to be surpassed in the history of mankind. The powers of hell have been let loose, and rained destruction on an earthly Paradise. Strange

irony of Nature! Imagination can frame nothing fairer to outward view than the sister islands of St. Lucia and Martinique. Yet like a treacherous beauty, whose smiles bode ruin to her lovers, they hide within their bosom the seeds of all mischief. Wasting fevers lurk in their hidden swamps, and deadly serpents wait on our path at every step; far below the fire-demon is at work, shaking the bars of his rocky prison, until the hour when he shall overwhelm garden and cane-field, palm-tree and spice-bearing shrub, toiler and pleasure-seeker, in one red tempest of ruin.

One island may serve as a type for all. In size, shape, vegetation, and character of the inhabitants there is a close resemblance to be traced along the whole line of those palm-clad peaks which have risen from those sunny waters. Let us, then, follow the fortunes of a band of holiday-makers who are seeking their happy hunting-ground in St. Vincent. They are five in number, all men of about the same age, young schoolmasters from Barbados. When we first make their acquaintance they are standing on the little jetty in Kingstown harbour, waiting for the mail-boat which is to carry them and their chattels to Château Belair, twenty miles down the coast. The boat is late, as everything always is in this Circean climate, and they have time to look about them. Before them lies Bequia, an island of some extent, the largest of the Grenadines which stretch southwards in a long line, binding St. Vincent, as with an emerald chain, to Grenada. The little harbour and

town have awaked for a moment from their normal state of slumber, for it is mail-day, and the quays and jetty are thronged by a bustling crowd. At last the mail-boat, which plies between Kingstown and Château Belair, nearly the whole length of the leeward coast, is seen nearing the landing-steps,—no snorting, panting steamboat, such as plies along the neighbouring coast of St. Lucia, but a huge canoe made from the trunk of a single tree. In the forward part sits the crew, consisting of five burly negroes, who day after day row their unwieldy craft from Kingstown to Château Belair and back, a distance of forty miles; no white man could perform such a feat, at any rate in this climate. Between the crew and the passengers rises a huge pile of baggage and mails. After a lively altercation between one of our party and a ragged negro, who is not satisfied with his fee for carrying some goods, we take our places; the captain, a dapper little mulatto with regular features, gives the signal, and we push off. The Ethiopian porter grows frantic, as the space widens between us and the pier. "Hi! you mean white man, come back! You no gen'lman! cheat poor nigger! I'se 'member you!" But the boat sweeps round a headland, and the angry, capering figure is lost to view.

On we go, ploughing our way through a sapphire sea, round headland after headland, from bay to bay. Wooded heights rise from near the water's edge, fringed, where they meet the sky-line, with waving palms. At their foot nestle the wooden cabins of the negroes, shaded by the broad fronds of the cocoa-nut trees. Naked negro children gambol on the black volcanic sand, or dive and swim in the tepid waters. Truly a happy creature seems the negro of St. Vin-

cent, not the care-worn anxious being we had known in Barbados, where all must work or starve. Here there is room enough for all, and the African, if he will, may keep perpetual holiday. Clothes he has none, or next to none, and he wants none. A few sticks put rudely together serve him for a house. A little plot of land supplies his modest store of yams, plantains, and sweet potatoes. The bountiful cocoa-nut grows along all the shore, providing him with shelter, timber, meat, and wholesome drink. Cold he knows not; want can hardly reach him. Surely this at least is a place where poverty is no curse. Yet Nature has her compensations, and will not suffer any of her children to be exempt from the doom pronounced against all the sons of Adam. Fearful hurricanes sweep over these quiet retreats, levelling every tree, and scattering the frail huts like houses of cards. And not far away lies in uneasy slumber the fearful monster who will one day bury half this little world in a grave of fire.

But these are afterthoughts. No such gloomy reflections shadow our minds, as we glide smoothly along under that summer sky and over that laughing sea. The power which moves our ponderous pinnacle is hidden from view by the pile of miscellaneous goods which divides us from the crew. But we can hear them well enough, as they laugh, and shout, and jest with one another; so light on those brawny shoulders lies their labour, which would soon kill one of us. Let us stand up for a moment, and we shall see them; there they are, five lusty fellows, swinging powerfully together to the cadence of a rude boatman's chant. Eyes rolling, teeth gleaming, tongues wagging, they haul away at their heavy oars as if the Souffrière were in full eruption behind us. They nod and shout a

greeting as they see us peeping at them over the merchandise; "Hi, master! Good evening, old master!"—and they pound away harder than ever. Once or twice we stop at some sea-side village to land passengers or mails. Then the jolly skipper places a conch-shell, pierced to form a trumpet, to his lips, and sounds a hoarse blast which fills all the hollow shore. Thus on we go, hour after hour, with no other pause until the sun begins to stoop towards the west. At last a long headland appears, and a little further to seawards a steep wooded island. Behind that headland lies our goal. The skipper shouts a challenge to his crew, and they bend their backs manfully to the call; the boat bounds forward, rounds the cape, and we glide into the smooth bay of Château Belair. A crazy wooden jetty, a row of ware-houses, a little church, and a straggling street running up into the valley, such is the foreground of the picture which lies before us. Far different is the background of that homely scene. Close behind the little hamlet towers a colossal hill, clothed to its summit with a dark vesture of forest trees. It is the Morne Garu, the Mountain of Spectres, home of the jumbie and the duppy. Dark and awful he looks, the spectre-mountain, even now, when his swarthy sides are bathed in the rich radiance of a tropical sunset. We pay him the homage which is his due; yet what is he compared to his mighty brother, who towers further northward in majestic isolation, half eclipsed in a canopy of golden cloud? One name is on our lips, one thought is in our hearts, as we cry with one voice, "The Souffrière!"

The sun is dipping in the western waters as we reach the little mountain chalet which is to be our home for the next week. Built on the top

of an isolated hill behind the village, it commands a grand view of mountain and sea. After a hasty meal we sally forth to catch a last glimpse of the great twin brethren, the main objects of our visit, now fast vanishing from view in the shadows of night. Darkness closes round us as we gaze; but a spirit of unrest is stirring in our blood, which will not suffer us to seek the shelter of our cottage, and we wander down the hill into the moist shades of the valley. It is dark, for as yet there is no moon; but soon the black wall of shadow which marks the confines of the forest begins to show glancing points of light. Thicker and thicker they spring from the ebon face of the night, these twinkling eyes of fire. Above, below, on all sides of us, the whole air is ablaze with those living lamps. It is the fire-flies who are keeping high festival to-night, revelling in the clean, rain-washed air. It is the larger sort, called by the natives *La Belle*, which is now thronging the still valley in countless myriads. For some time we gaze in huge content on these winged stars of the forest; and at last, weary with a day full of wonders, we turn our steps homewards, and are lighted by fairy lanterns to bed.

Two or three days afterwards I was lying in that dreamy reverie which hovers between sleeping and waking, when a hoarse voice broke in upon my drowsy meditations: "All right, sar! 'ere we are, sar!" Peering through the mosquito-curtains I became conscious of a gaunt figure standing in the open doorway. It was the figure of a gigantic negro, clad in a tattered shirt and short trousers ingeniously fashioned in patchwork, with bare legs and arms, and a countenance picturesquely hideous. His mouth was distended by an amiable grin, disclosing a ragged line of teeth; but

his most remarkable feature was his nose, or rather noses, for he had two of them, each sharply defined with its single nostril, and divided from its neighbour by a deep groove or channel. In one bony paw he clutched a naked cutlass, in the other was grasped the crumpled remnant of a hat. When I was sufficiently recovered from the first shock of this morning vision to be able to think, I remembered that we had on the previous day engaged the services of a negro guide named Colliss, to pilot us up the Morne Garu. The negotiation had been conducted through his wife, or Madame (as the gallant Colliss always calls his lovely helpmeet), for the great man himself was not at home, having gone up the hill to attend to his crop of arrowroot. I greeted the genial apparition therefore, and invited him to take a pipe and a dram while we were making ready to start. The mighty hunter and master of woodcraft was attended by a satellite, in the shape of a fat negro boy, to carry our supply of provisions; for he himself was far too high a personage to stoop to mere porter's work. While our single servant, an elderly negress, variously known as Crawford, Crawkins, or Squawkins, is preparing breakfast, Colliss is careful to inform us of our singular good fortune in securing his services as guide. "Yes, sar! I'se take you safe up mountain; I'se bring you back safe down mountain. Odder niggers not know de way,—starve in de forest." In the midst of his eloquence Colliss is interrupted by wild cries from the direction of the kitchen. It is the voice of Crawkins in distress. Always quick to respond to an appeal to my better feelings, I hasten to the aid of our sooty Cinderella. Alas for the hope of breakfast! Crawkins is discovered, on hands and knees before the domestic

hearth, scraping up from among the cinders the mangled remains of a comely dish of eggs and bacon. The tender nature of Crawkins was touched to its centre; each blackened and leathery fragment, as it was deposited on the dish, was bedewed copiously with her tears. I comforted her as best I might, and we breakfasted lightly on the healthful banana. Fortified by this hermit's fare we leave Crawkins in charge of our quarters, with strict injunctions not to set herself or the premises on fire, and start on our adventurous journey. In front stalks our grim and dusky Hermes, with no other burden than the ever-ready cutlass, while the boy, with a heavy basket of provisions on his head, brings up the rear.

As the ascent of the Morne Garu was but in the nature of a preliminary training to that of the Souffrière, it is unnecessary to describe this part of our adventures in detail. After a severe and prolonged effort, we reached our goal. The day was clear, and our eyes ranged over a wide prospect of mountain, forest, and sea. A vast amphitheatre of hills, connecting the Souffrière and Morne Garu in one system, encloses a sort of inland basin, broken here and there by inferior heights. Worn away as it is, and half obliterated in places, we fancy that we can trace the ruined wall of an enormous crater, formed, perhaps, in the primeval convulsion which heaved St. Vincent from the depths of the sea.

After this initiation into the lesser mysteries we brace ourselves for a bold incursion into the very home of the dread power which broods night and day, year by year, over that fair island. A week's vigorous exertion will barely suffice for our purpose. To make our present quarters the centre of our explorations is im-

possible, for, starting from Château Belair, the mere ascent and descent of the mountain occupy a whole day. We must shift our camp into the very heart of the Souffrière, and spend a whole week on the brink of the crater. Accordingly, two days after the ascent of Morne Garu, we issue our orders to Colliss to bring half a dozen bearers next morning, to carry our goods to the top of the Souffrière. Early next day we start in a long procession, and make our way through the cane-fields and arrowroot-beds which lie on our way to the mountain's foot. Colliss is in his glory; with a red handkerchief wound about his bare scalp, and the remains of a felt hat perched jauntily above it, a black stump of a pipe in his mouth, and the inevitable cutlass brandished in his right hand, he marshals his tattered troop with matchless dignity. "You, sar, plow yer nose!" he shouts sternly to a luckless youth whose nether garments are somewhat in disorder. How could a hint be more delicately conveyed? To look at him you would not suppose that this stalwart Colliss was what one would call a weakling. Yet he deplors the decay of his powers. "Yes, sar," he sighs, "I was a giant off sixteen; but I carry de burning charcoal on my head, and she burn off my hair, and take away my stren'th." Thus dwelling on the glories of his vanished youth, Colliss brings us to the foot of the winding path which will lead us to the crater's edge. The ascent is gentle, and we have no such struggle before us as on the Morne Garu. Shaded all the way by vast forest-trees, with wild begonias growing round our path, we plod steadily upwards for two thousand feet. I had fallen a little behind the rest, and feeling thirsty I called a little negro boy who was dogging my steps after the fashion of his race, and asked him if he could find me

some water. "O yes, master," he answers readily. "But I have nothing to put it in," I object. "Never mind, old master; me bring it in bush;" and he dived down the slope, and disappeared in the thicket. I was wondering what the strange creature could mean, when he emerged again, holding in his hand a sort of bottle extemporised out of two huge leaves, and containing at least a pint of water. How I was to come at the contents of this frail vessel I did not see, and sat staring helplessly at my young benefactor, who gazed at me with equal perplexity. Suddenly his jetty features were lighted up by an idea. "Never mind, old master," he cried again; "me's bring anodder bush;" and he dived again. A minute after he reappeared, holding in his hand a tube formed from the section of a bamboo. How he procured it, while both hands were occupied with his bottle of leaves, is a mystery to this day; but there it was, and by its aid I drank my fill of water, and went on my way refreshed.

After my thirst had been thus relieved by the ingenious negro, I rejoined our party, which had halted for rest and refreshment under the shade of a vast fig-tree, known as the Maroon tree in this neighbourhood. Colliss is gloating over the flayed corpse of some wretched little animal, which has been slain by his dog. It is the agouti (or *gooty* as he calls it) which, with the manachoo, is the only mammal indigenous to the island. After half an hour's rest we form in single file, Colliss in the van, with the red carcase of his victim dangling at his side. We now pass out of the region of forest-trees, and ascend a steep and narrow path formed of volcanic ash, for we are climbing the cone of the crater, where nothing grows but dwarf palms and bush. Now and then we hear the clear, wild

note of the Soufrière bird, a beautiful creature which seems to be found only on this mountain. A puff of sulphurous air assails our nostrils, the feverish breath of the Titan whose prison-walls we are scaling. The sun beats fiercely on our heads as we strain upwards, and we are not sorry when a joyous shout from our advanced guard announces that we are approaching our goal. Another moment, and we stand on the edge of the crater.

At first all we can see is a whirling mass of mist, eddying like steam in that vast cauldron; but as we look, a deep rent appears in that swaying curtain, and we catch a glimpse of a green and ghastly pool a thousand feet below us. As the wind freshens, the white veil rolls away, and all that gaping chasm lies revealed. The walls of the crater form an irregular circle about three miles in circumference; seen from above they seem to be almost perpendicular, but in reality there is such a considerable slope that a stone hurled from the brink by a strong and practised hand cannot reach the waters of the lake. A strange sight is the livid floor of that dread abyss, ever changing in hue, now green, now black as ebony, and then again so dazzlingly white that it looks like a sheet of ice covered with snow. The sides of the crater are clothed with a dense growth of bush and stunted trees. Here and there a yellow flower, somewhat resembling the daffodil, relieves the general monotony of green. The prevailing impression is one of solemn and awful beauty, and almost unearthly calm. With such loveliness has the healing hand of time clothed that hideous wound which the earth-born monster once tore in his mother's side. The thought inevitably suggests itself, when will that calm be broken? When will that

loveliness be marred? Nine years have gone by since we asked that question; and now we have had our answer.

Meanwhile a rolling column of mist has crept silently up the eastern side of the mountain, and begins to descend into that yawning pit. On it sweeps, that cloudy battalion, reaching down with writhing, snaky fingers to greet the spirits of the flood below. Gradually the lake and walls of the crater are hidden from view, and the whole void is filled by the white mist. We wake from our dream to pursue our march upwards along the wall of the crater, to the little wooden shelter-house where we are to lodge. It is a tiny two-roomed cabin built in a snug recess under a sheltering rock, where the sides of the crater reach their greatest elevation. We have the key, and permission to use the shelter, from the Governor's office in Kingstown. The path rises steeply before us, and it is half an hour before we reach the hut. Here a small difficulty arises; the lock is hampered, and the key will not turn; but one vigorous kick soon disposes of this obstacle, and we enter and take possession. The bearers are paid and dismissed, and after a hasty meal we prepare to take up our quarters for the night. Four of the party are provided with hammocks; I, who abhor that pendulous and uneasy form of couch, go forth to gather a bundle of grass, with which I build a nest for myself on the floor. When all is ready, we gather round the lamp, to smoke a final pipe, and taste a temperate glass. We discuss our plan of campaign, and when that is settled we startle the echoes of the mountain with many a lusty stave. Then, after many final pipes, and one more temperate glass (reader, 'tis a thirsty climate!), we seek our several lairs. One plump and elderly

colleague is curled up in his hammock and sleeping like a baby before the rest of us have kicked off our boots. At last the lamp is extinguished, and our little shed with its five living occupants is wrapped in the great silence of the mountain.

Our little hermitage lies thirty-five hundred feet above sea-level, and at that elevation the climate is sufficiently cool, the thermometer ranging from sixty to seventy degrees. An unwonted feeling of chilliness rouses me at an early hour, and before the others are stirring I steal quietly out to inhale the welcome freshness and enjoy a quiet hour alone. A light mist, already melting before the growing power of the sun, covers the mountain-top, and everything gives promise of a fine day. Something stirs in the bushes which overhang the crater's brink, and I see a gleam as of living emerald. I stand motionless, hardly even breathing lest I startle that shy denizen of the wilderness, whatever it be. And lo! it appears, the good genius of the mountain, in the shape of a tiny humming-bird, with a crest of vivid green, which glances like a living jewel as the exquisite little creature darts rapidly from spray to spray. Presently it settles on the topmost twig, and there remains, unabashed by my presence. Is it fancy, or do I really catch the whispered notes of a tiny song, faint and infinitely low? No, it is not delusion, it is the voice of that lovely little spirit which I hear. For some minutes it continues, and then the voices of my companions are heard from the hut, breaking the silver thread of that fairy song, and recalling me from the thoughts of that gentle vision to the grosser cares of breakfast. The charcoal-pan is filled and lighted, and one of the party, setting it on his head, runs up and down the path,

to fan it into a glow. Another stands over the spirit-lamp, busily stirring porridge with a stick. Hammocks are rolled up, my litter is raked into a corner, and when all is prepared we sit down to our homely board with mountain appetites.

We have hardly finished when a voice is heard outside, and through the open door we see an old white-headed negro, gazing intently into the crater, and muttering to himself. "Hi! she no talk at all!" such is the old man's quaint comment as he peers down on the sluggish waters of the lake. The expression is uncouth, but the thought is just, and the poor old fellow has touched the dominant note in that scene,—its awful, and, if I may say so, threatening calm. Curiosity, and perhaps some dim instinct of poetry, has prompted the veteran to visit these wilds, which he has never seen before, though he has lived nearly his whole life in the island. He tells us something of his story. He has been a slave: "Black man make war on black man; take much prisoners, sell dem to white man; white man put prisoners on big ship, two, three, four masts, and sail ober de seas; most ob de prisoners die on de way, trow dem into de sea; me come here, where I lib thirty years as slave." Such is that simple chapter in the dark story of the black man's wrongs and the white man's shame.

It is time to give some more particular description of the vast mountain which we have set ourselves to explore. Our account may gain some interest from the fact that these happy fields, the playground of our holidays, have now vanished for ever. Those scenes of varied beauty and interest are now converted into a burning fiery furnace. When the powers of chaos have spent their rage, a new world will arise on the ruins of the

old, with new shapes of loveliness and wonder; but no eye will ever again behold that realm of ours. The great basin on whose edge we were lodging is known as the Old Crater, and was formed at some remote period of which there is no record. North of this, and divided from it by a narrow and perilous ridge, is the New Crater, smaller in extent, formed by the great eruption of 1812. On the site of the New Crater there once stood a conical hill, as I saw in an old print of the eighteenth century. Behind these, on the north-western side, is a broken region, seamed by innumerable gullies, some of which are of great depth, and closed by a line of precipitous hills, towering three or four hundred feet above the extensive plateau which forms the top of the mountain. Seen from a distance this region has the appearance of a level plain; but he who tries to cross it, choosing what seems the shortest route to the heights beyond, will find himself involved in a labyrinth of gullies deep enough to swallow whole armies. West of the mountain is a black and dreary waste, where the ashes from the last eruption lie piled to an immense depth, channelled in all directions by the violent tropical rains, which have formed deep alleys in the great cinder-bed down which you may wander for miles, at the risk of being whelmed by the fall of the quaking walls of ash towering fifty feet above your head. No green thing grows there; it is the realm of desolation, the very grave of Nature. Emerging thence we come to the last great feature of the Souffrière, a deep gorge through which the molten lava once plunged in a torrent of fire. There it lies now, a frozen, motionless river, with eddies and billows carved in stone.

Our first task is to descend the Old Crater. Provided with ropes, we make our way to the point where the

wall is lowest, about eight hundred feet above the lake. One by one we scramble down, easing our descent by the rope in dangerous places, and holding on by the queer little dwarf-palms, which greet us with a shower of dirty water from their cup-like crown of leaves. The walls drop sheer to the water's edge, leaving no beach. At the bottom we find a rude canoe, or raft, moored to a tree. Above us tower the walls of this vast Colosseum, and opposite, close to the sky-line, we can just discern our little cabin. A local legend is connected with this wild spot. The negroes say that a mermaid had made her home in the lake, and lived there with her daughter. Seeing her mother's dominion invaded by the bold, bad man who launched that raft on her waters, the mermaid's daughter died of grief; and a great flood, which occurred soon afterwards, causing much havoc and loss of life, was regarded as an act of vengeance on the part of the angry mother for the death of her child. At the risk of provoking a fresh explosion of wrath from the queen of these waters we strip off our clothes and plunge into the Stygian pool. The water is strongly tinged with alum and sulphur, and we emerge with eyes and noses smarting from the acrid solution. Then one adventurous spirit unmoors the crazy little raft, and launches out into the centre of the lake to take soundings. Down goes the lead three hundred feet; the line is run out, and has found no bottom.

On our way back we have a fine view of St. Lucia, with its trim peaks, the Pitons, rising like tall spires two thousand feet, now glowing rosy red in the sunset. When we reach the hut we find that our privacy has been invaded. A burly police-sergeant, attended by a lad, has come up from

Château Belair, to enquire into our violent and burglarious proceedings of the day before. We find means to appease the swarthy official; but all our eloquence will not avail to induce him to return by night to Château Belair, for the Souffrière has an evil name, and even by day is full of ghostly terrors for the negro. The boy, however, is bidden peremptorily to depart, and sets out in the gathering darkness with manifest reluctance. Half an hour afterwards we hear the sound of scampering feet, and a wild figure, with livid countenance and eyes rolling with terror, bursts into the hut, and leans, panting and speechless, against the wall. It is the policeman's boy. When he is able to speak, we gather that, on reaching the corner where the path branches off to the New Crater (he was going to Georgetown, on the windward side), he was met by a duppy (a sort of goblin), who stood in the path, and shouted in a terrible voice: "You cross my path these three times; I break your neck!" Not waiting to hear more the valiant youth turned tail, and ran with headlong speed down the path back to the hut. It would have been cruel, even if it had been possible, to drive the poor wretch out into the darkness again, and he was allowed to stay for the night.

Next morning a babel of voices startles us early from our slumbers, and turning out in a body to learn the cause of the commotion, we find a wild troop of ragged negroes, men, women, and children, camping out on the path close to our quarters. They are Shakers, poor even to destitution, who have tramped the whole length of the island from Kingstown to hold a prayer-meeting on the lone mountain top. No fitter spot could have

been chosen to kindle the true spirit of prayer,—the One Finite striving to rend the veil which divides it from the One Infinite. We watch these strange people, grouped in every attitude of religious ecstasy, some standing, some kneeling, stretching out their hands towards the crater, crying and beating their breasts.

The eventful week is drawing to its close, crowded with wonderful experiences not to be forgotten in a lifetime. It is our last evening, and we are returning from a long day's march which has led us into the remotest recesses of the mountain. Through the winding alleys of that city of ashes we take our way. No sign of life have we met in that home of desolation, save a huge black snake lying torpid in our path, having supped, apparently, on a near relation whose head was still protruding from the open jaws of his destroyer. A fit scene for that cannibal banquet! The sun is just kissing the red lips of the crater with his parting beams, and the mist gathers fast at our heels, as we come out into a wild, moor-like tract, through which we must pass to reach our hut. At this moment our ears are greeted by a clear, sweet note, and we pause in wonder to learn the source of that glorious song. Perched on the topmost spray of a solitary tree is seen the gay form of a Souffrière bird, pouring out all his heart in liquid music. Unscared by our presence he sings on; it is not unlikely that ours are the first human faces he has ever seen, and that experience has never taught him the fear of man. We turn away at last, but our steps are still followed by the chant of that lone singer, filling the wilderness with melody.

H. L. HAVELL.

EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

In the whole history of campaigning there has surely been no instance recorded where the victors have also endeavoured to secure simultaneously, and amidst the very sounds and sights of the battle-field, the more peaceful and possibly more permanent triumphs of the class-room. Minerva of old was certainly represented in armour, and so far a goddess of war as well as a divinity of the arts of peace; but we certainly never hear of the Romans feeding and teaching their enemies with one hand and smiting them with the other. The Romans taught their conquered foes, but it was not at the very moment of the shock of battle nor was it with the amenities of the modern concentration camp. No wonder Mrs. Fawcett's old Boer, when he saw the schools on the veldt, exclaimed, "*Allemachte*, here are the chosen people!" Without assuming to themselves such exclusive virtues as are implied in this compliment, still the British race during this campaign may take to itself a large amount of credit in grappling, at once and in a most practical and straightforward fashion, with the great question of education, which has for so long been the chief stumbling-block of South African politicians. To use Lord Milner's words, we have long begun to occupy our house in spite of guerilla tactics and European interference; and we have begun to do so in the best possible way by teaching our future fellow-occupants how to keep it clean and tidy and to improve it by the practical application of the arts and crafts of modern times. If we really are the chosen people our

task has not been altogether unlike the work of the Israelites of old, who had to build up the second temple with the trowel in one hand and a sword in the other.

There has been one fact in our favour, and this has been the willingness of the Boer population to learn their lessons. Had it been otherwise what power on earth could have forced them? But, fortunately, in this respect the task of educating our foes has been made easy. Mrs. Sarah Heckford, the widow of the philanthropist Dr. Heckford, who some five and thirty years ago introduced a children's hospital that won the admiration of Charles Dickens, has written in a very authoritative way on this question. For twenty years she has lived in the Transvaal, as a farmer among farmers, and she has placed it on record that the farming class in the Transvaal are keenly alive to the fact of their ignorance and that they are really anxious for knowledge. In a letter written to *THE TIMES* in 1901 she emphasised the supreme importance of this point and the value of this unique opportunity: "Let us use these camps," she wrote, "as the seedling-beds of a plantation." How different is this wise counsel from the foolish sentimentalism of Miss Hobhouse whose opinions, crudely formed and unwisely expressed, have been used by the enemies of their country to create a prejudice against the Government and to thwart their action. Miss Hobhouse, recently arrived from England, swept the veldt carefully for a grievance, and found one in the terrible fact that a camp

or hospital faced north, and therefore, must necessarily be exposed to the fierce blasts to which we are accustomed in the northern hemisphere. She forgot, apparently, that she had crossed the line, and that the whole breadth of tropical and sub-tropical Africa lay between the camp and the north. Mrs. Heckford, with twenty years' experience of the South African veldt, wrote with knowledge and pointed out an admirable opportunity of doing practical good.

The attitude displayed by these two ladies is typical. If we are going to govern and legislate for South Africa according to the ignorant, impassioned, and unpractical sentimentalism of any kind of self-constituted guide, ministering of set purpose or accidentally to party passions at home, then our chance of ruling South Africa wisely is gone. It is necessary to bear in mind that we have to legislate for things as they exist under the Southern Cross, and that it is a fatal mistake to regard affairs there from the small and mean outlook of partisans at home. In the domain of education, and more especially in the education of the South African natives,—a problem greater than that of training the adult or young Boers—it is imperative to employ the best judgment and to base our efforts upon the ripest local experience.

Coming to close quarters with this great question it is evident that the extempore methods of the concentration camps, excellent as they are, cannot suffice for long. With the dispersion of the inmates and the influx of the forty thousand prisoners now in the Bermudas, India, and Ceylon, some organic scheme will have to be devised both for the Transvaal and Orange River colonies. The administrative task will be nothing more nor less than that which has

been already faced and worked out in Cape Colony, and to gain a clear conception of this it may be useful to draw attention to a few of its historical landmarks. The Cape University was not built in a day and, step by step, it has emerged from a region of doubtful efforts and experimental plans till it has reached its present chartered position. Whatever has to be done in the new colonies must necessarily be an expansion or enlargement of the old and well-tried system, the material, whether of natives or of Europeans, being to all intents and purposes the same.

South Africa is a very conservative land in many respects, and, strange to say, what the Cape Boer and his wife were more than a century ago, in the days of Thunberg, Sparrman, and Barrou, so were they in the back regions of Bechuanaland and the Transvaal up to the present day,—until in fact the war and the discipline and teaching of the concentration camps opened their eyes. Indeed, we may go so far as to say that the primitive type of crass ignorance and prejudice still exists in the persons of the wandering Boers of Calvinia, Carnarvon, Fraserberg, and Namaqualand and throughout the north-west regions of Cape Colony itself, wherever in those huge monotonous spaces drought or locusts have constantly compelled the pastoral Boer to be on the move.

To go back a little in Cape history we find ourselves asking this important question: "How far and to what extent were the old Dutch rulers to blame for allowing their nominal subjects to grow up in ignorance? Did they make any real effort to keep them in touch with a proper government or an orderly civilisation, or were the difficulties too great for them to overcome?" To answer these questions is almost equivalent to raising the whole subject

of the comparative value of Dutch and British colonisation. Certainly the obstacles in the way of education at the lonely port of the Cape of Good Hope were no greater than those which met the Puritan settlers of New England. In one land the Alleghanies were a natural hindrance, and in the other the vast Karroo; but in North America we never hear of any natural obstacle so great and so overwhelming as to crush out of life a township school. In Australia and New Zealand education has been, as in North America, the first thought of pioneers wherever they could gather together.

At the Cape of Good Hope it must certainly be borne in mind that there was a small official clique of Dutch magnates in power, a close corporation in themselves, imbued with the narrowest views and corrupted morally by the example of the East. They were an exclusive trade-guild whose constant dealings with inferior races seemed to deaden their sympathies. In the matter of education and self-government nothing could be done. English colonists began with the idea of legislating for themselves and their posterity as a body of free men. Nowhere in the world have the Dutch been able to throw off the traditional selfishness of medieval guilds, the spirit of the petty-huckster lying over all their undertakings. "Giving too little and asking too much" is a most true aphorism applied to the colonial Dutch in any quarter of the globe. In estimating Great Britain's title-deeds to South Africa we must admit that they depend not only on their technical correctness, but also on certain moral and philanthropic grounds. The British replaced an old and effete Dutch colony and turned it into a vigorous seed-bed of new energies. The old Dutch hulk,—to use a

nautical simile—was ruined, dismantled and thoroughly useless; indeed, like a half-floating wreck, it was dangerous to all others. The transfer of flags meant inestimable progress and untold liberties, and to use the words of Judge Watermeyer, himself an African-born man and one of the most distinguished of its colonists, there was no education, no Press, no post-office, no books (excepting those in the possession of men holding official rank), only three ministers of religion for the entire country population outside the Cape Peninsula. At the present day, when Great Britain is again taking over a derelict of Dutch rule and the legacy of a hopelessly corrupt government hostile to education, civil enfranchisement, and the privileges of better times, it is as well to remember that it is a case of history repeating itself in a most striking way.

It fell to the lot of Judge Watermeyer to preside at a very notable Education Commission, which sat in 1861-2 and took exhaustive evidence on the subject from every quarter of Cape Colony. Their report lies at the base of the whole educational system now in vogue in this colony, and deals with the entire question of the education of Europeans, both Dutch and British, and also of natives at the mission-station. Among those who sat upon this Commission were the Honourable William Porter (founder of the Porter Scholarship which, in a way, anticipated the idea of the Rhodes Bequest by providing money for a training at a home university), Mr. Saul Solomon (the well-known politician and philanthropist, and the uncle of the present Sir Richard Solomon and also of William Henry Solomon, a Porter scholar, both of whom hold high positions at the South African Bar), Mr. John Fairbairn (a name well known in South

Africa from its connection with Thomas Pringle in the fight for the liberty of the Press), Mr. James Rose-Innes (father of the present distinguished barrister and politician, whose name is in the mouths of all men as the safe and loyal leader of the British cause), and Mr. Langham Dale, afterwards Superintendent General of Education. A large portion of the evidence collected by the Commission may be generally uninteresting but, having regard to its historical scope and its retrospective character, it is eminently instructive at this particular crisis of South African history. It throws into relief the broad contrast between the Dutch and British methods, and provides us with a clear chain of facts proving how sincere and whole-hearted were the efforts of British administrators to deal with the problem. It is very doubtful whether Dr. Theal, or any other writer on South African history, has ever done full justice to the unpublished chapter of educational reform in South Africa, a chapter full of credit to its authors and originators, and a great testimony to the inner and progressive spirit of British colonisation. Few know much about it, as South Africa has so often thrilled the imagination with the episodes of frontier wars and strife, but, for all that, it lies on record for those who wish to delve in these matters. The Commission reviewed the position from the very beginning of Dutch rule, and it is curious to learn that, at that date, there was no rooted objection to teach the coloured people. As early as 1677 the Consistory of the Dutch Church proposed to the governor that, following the example of the government of the Dutch in the East Indies, he should sanction the appointment of a teacher for the coloured servants. Unfortunately

this was but a short gleam; in the words of the Report the obligation of teaching of this class was soon lost to view both by the Dutch Governor and colonists. As a great favour the Moravian missionary Schmidt was permitted from 1737 to 1742 to erect an institution near the spot which the United Brethren still occupy at Genadendal, known as the Vale of Grace; but after the latter year he was compelled to give it up and return to Holland. It is important to notice this, for, here was the feeling of the Orange River Voortrekkers,¹ here the prejudice which afterwards made itself felt at Kolobeng when David Livingstone was burned out of house and home by the Boers, here the root of bitterness traceable throughout all the Boer annals.

How can we account for this change of feeling on the part of the Dutch? Is there any reason which turned the milk of human kindness as shown in early legislation to fierce hostility and bitter racial prejudice? Probably the cause lies deep down in the history of the Voortrekkers. They had met the Hottentot clans and encountered the wily Kaffirs on the frontier and, being without any really firm restraints had begun to despise and hate them. Intermixture with the natives had not heightened their sense of responsibility, and the coloured man took his peculiar and natural revenge by bringing about the deterioration of his master. The Dutch Reformed Church had not kept pace with the Voortrekkers in their sojourn in the wilderness, and even the most elementary form of education did not exist. The Boer of the seventeenth century might acknowledge the power of Christian baptism

¹ The early Dutch farmers who in 1835-38 crossed the Orange River and founded the Boer States.

among the natives as practically amounting to an act of manumission; the Boer of the eighteenth and nineteenth century dismissed these with a curse, calling them baboons.

The Commission of 1861 referred back to five distinct epochs in the history of education in South Africa: (1) the School-Ordinance of Governor de Chavonnes in 1714; (2) de Mist's School-Order of 1804; (3) the Cradock Clerk schools; (4) the English schools of Lord Charles Somerset established in 1822; (5) the historical memorandum on education written by Sir John Herschel in 1838, laying down for the first time the leading principle of the system now in vogue. The first two were Dutch efforts, the last three British, and it is not necessary to describe them all in detail. The Chavonnes ordinance was a religious ordinance only, and provided that the children should be brought up in the fear and knowledge of God; but all teachers were bound to subscribe to the Articles of the Synod of Dort. This is nothing more nor less than might have been expected in the early days of the eighteenth century, long before the idea of broad schemes of secular instruction had gained a footing. To those who know South Africa it has, however, seemed extraordinary that the spirit of the Chavonnes ordinance should have lasted so long. It has been carefully nurtured by the Dutch Reformed Church, but not without protest on the part of those members of that Church known as the Liberals. The Dopper Church is of course extremely obscurantist, and it is in the Transvaal that many of the Doppers are found at the present time.¹ But what was really the

weakest point of the Chavonnes ordinance was its absolute neglect of the country districts. It was inapplicable beyond Cape Town and was never intended to be applied to such outlying districts as Stellenbosch, Drakenstein, and Waveren, the latter a portion of what is now known as Tulbagh. These districts were really within sight of the Cape Peninsula. Outside the circle favoured by the Chavonnes ordinance colonists were permitted, as a great privilege, to pray for the discharge of soldiers and sailors in the employment of the Dutch Company, and to obtain the loan of their services as teachers. Even this doubtful privilege was curtailed in 1743, "lest a door be opened to drag in erroneous doctrine." So late as the year 1793, two years before the British occupation, a proclamation by Commandant Sluysken insisted upon proofs attested by the Landdrost and clergyman that the applicants really needed teachers, "in order to prevent covetous persons from releasing tailors, shoemakers, and other tradesmen under the name of schoolmasters." It is important to point out how this Chavonnes ordinance, — really the only serious effort made by the Dutch to educate the colonist during an occupation of one hundred and fifty years — lags behind the efforts of New England. Bancroft, the historian of the United States, observes (vol. i., p. 369) that in Puritan New England, in 1642, every one was bound to read the English language, and, also, to the end that "learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers," it was ordered in 1647 that every township, after it had reached the total of fifty householders, should appoint someone to teach all children to read and write, and when any township shall rise to one hundred families they shall set

¹ The Doppers are the extreme Puritans of the Dutch Church, distinguished by dress and speech.

up a grammar-school in order that the pupils might be instructed for a university. In Cape Colony the Dutch Koopmann always desired to check colonial expansion and to penalise trekking by every means in his power, keeping all administration centralised at the Castle at Cape Town, with the most deplorable result. Nor did the Dutch Reformed Church make any endeavour to supply the deficiencies of their Government by any voluntary effort in the mission-field.

De Mist's School-Order of 1804 requires little more than a passing notice. It was a frantic effort on the part of the Dutch rulers to recover lost ground, and was promulgated after the first British occupation, one result of which was to open the eyes of the phlegmatic Dutch to the evils of the past. The problem of training the remote country districts remained exactly where it was even under de Mist's Order. It was hard to provide ways and means even at the Cape Peninsula, and a tax was levied on foreign beer and wine and on the Loan Bank (the latter a tax payable to the Church upon the manumission of slaves), a compulsory duty on wills, a tax on horses in Cape Town, a tax on slaves, a tax on members of Cape Town clubs, club stewards, carriages, billiard-table keepers, and so forth. But in the districts of Graaf Reinet and Swellendam it was never realised that there was such an enactment as de Mist's School-Order. It fell still-born everywhere, and is hardly ever alluded to except to raise a smile. The Commission of 1861-2 makes a very brief and disparaging reference to it.

No sooner had the British come to South Africa with the full intention of remaining there than efforts were made at once to grapple with the problem of education, especially in the outlying districts. Under Sir John

Cradock, who has left his name to a well known district and town in the north-east of Cape Colony, Church Clerk Schools, as they were called, were directed in 1812 to be established at Zwartland (now Caledon), Uitenhage, the Paarl, Zwartland (now Malmesbury), Tulbagh, Swellendam, Graaf-Reinet, George and, nearer Cape Town, at Simon's Bay. They were to be created under the authority of the Government. To show the absolute impartiality of the scheme the District Commissioners consisted of the Dutch Landdrost, or the deputy Landdrost, the Dutch clergyman and elders of the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1813 the Bible and School Commission received a new impetus from British legislation, and in 1823 we read that this Commission was made up of three pastors of the Dutch Reformed Church, one Lutheran pastor, the Colonial chaplain, the military chaplain and a member of the old Burgher Senate,—in other words, it was mainly a Dutch Commission. This tolerant and broad-minded action on the part of the British authorities contrasted very favourably with the treatment meted out by the Dutch Church to the French Huguenot refugees of 1680-90 to whom they granted the smallest possible concessions, and finally brought into line by the strictest measures of conformity, stamping out their language together with their particular tenets. We ask, how has this generous treatment of the Dutch Reformed Church weighed with its ministers? Has it won any gratitude? Has it brought its expected reward? It must be confessed that this Boer war has brought to light the deep ingratitude of the Dutch Reformed Church. Many of its pastors have played the unworthy part of incendiaries and have fanned the flames of war. Professor Cachet and P. L. Vorster of

Burghersdorp have been the strongest supporters of what has proved for England one of the bloodiest and most expensive wars of the century, putting the clock back for many a year in Cape Colony. Yet where lay the grievance? When in 1900 the Burghersdorp Seminary was emptied of its students who seized the Mauser and the bandolier, what, we enquire, could have been their teaching? In 1822, during the governorship of Lord Charles Somerset, another step forward was taken. It must be mentioned that Sir John Cradock, in addition to his church schools, had also made an attempt to establish farmers' schools in the more remote parts of the country, thus laying the beginnings of a class of school which needs particular attention in South Africa. But so far at all centres tuition had been conducted wholly in Dutch and in connection with the Dutch Reformed Church. This state of things of course could not last, and accordingly Lord Charles Somerset introduced six principal teachers from England and Scotland, and gave them posts at Graaf-Reinet, Uitenhage, George, Tulbagh, Stellenbosch and Caledon so that "at every principal place throughout the Colony competent and respectable instructors should be appointed for the purpose of facilitating the acquirement of the English language among all classes of the colonists." Shortly afterwards elementary free schools on the monitorial system were established in the rural districts, the teachers receiving fixed government stipends. Lord Charles Somerset was autocratic, as we may infer from the nature of his dispute with Pringle and Fairbairn on the subject of a Free Press in Cape Colony; but he was the author of two good things when he introduced English teachers and encouraged the breed of Cape horses.

The time, however, soon came for a more complete co-ordination of the whole educational system in Cape Colony, and this was foreshadowed in the well-known memorandum of Sir John Herschel in 1838. This famous man, who has left his name to a district and town in Cape Colony, was at that date conducting his observations at the Cape Observatory. No better authority could have been summoned to the assistance of the educational reformer, and a perusal of his extremely interesting remarks will show that he anticipated many of the modern conclusions on the vexed subject of public and elementary teaching. Of course he was confronted at the outset with the religious difficulty, and he avowed himself hostile to the project then in view of making the teaching profession necessarily a preliminary to taking orders either in the Dutch or English Churches. At the same time he thought that "the perusal of Scripture, as the fountain of moral instruction, was an absolute necessity for the young;" but the more delicate question of expounding the Scriptures according to a particular denomination was left on one side. Concurrently with his other reforms he suggested higher remuneration for the teaching profession, going upon the scale of £150 per annum with a dwelling-house as the lowest remuneration, an amount equal now to £300 per annum. Other remarkable and far-sighted suggestions related to itinerant lectureships, and aid to farmers' schools, a requirement that never seems to have been lost sight of by all English educational reformers in South Africa, and likely to meet them again on a larger and more important scale in the new colonies of the Transvaal and the Orange River. Sir John also advocated help to mission-schools, a form of help which has always been objected

to very strongly by a large class of Boers from that day to this. The London Missionary Society, the Moravians, the South African Missionary Society, the Wesleyans, the Rhenish and the Berlin missions were all in the field, and it was the opinion of our enlightened reformer that they should all be helped. In this case it might be voluntarism that was being aided and supplemented by the State; but surely the principle of voluntarism as displayed in the cause of missions carried on among a heathen population deserved help even if it were on the common ground simply of mere social improvement.

Some of the evidence given to the Commission by Bishop Gray is extremely interesting. Part of the principle of State-aid he was willing to endorse, and he thought that grants should be given in proportion to local and voluntary effort; but he would leave to the Managing Board or to the Committee entire control of their internal discipline and school arrangements subject to public inspection of a defined character. With regard to the religious question the Bishop thought that the Scriptures should be read and interpreted in the various schools as before, and that the choice of Catechisms should be left to committees. Bishop Gray has sometimes been labelled by the Dutch clergy in a good-humoured way (for his lordship was an agreeable and fascinating personality) as the Pope of South Africa. Still there was nothing very dictatorial about his ideas on popular and elementary education, for had they been strictly followed the result would have been in most places a preponderating influence for the Dutch Reformed Church and the Dutch School Committees generally managed by Deacons and Elders.

The tale of development is a long

and varied one, too long to be traced in detail here. In 1865 the system laid down by Sir John Herschel was practically adopted by the State. The Examining Board, which contained within itself the germs of a future university and which had been called into existence in 1858, continued its functions and granted certificates of merit to those candidates who showed themselves deserving of it. The first Porter Scholarship was awarded in 1869 by this body. The Act which established and incorporated the University of the Cape of Good Hope was assented to on June 26th, 1873. A body politic and corporate was called into being, consisting of a Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, a Council, and Graduates. The Act of Incorporation provided that payments out of the public purse should be made to a body of professors and lecturers, giving instruction in the University curriculum; and in August, 1877, in the days of Sir Bartle Frere letters patent gave the University an ample charter.

There is one circumstance that has told strongly in favour of efficiency in the Cape examinations, and this is the presence from time to time of men able and willing to examine. First and foremost the Cape Royal Observatory has secured to the colony a succession of brilliant mathematicians from the days of Sir John Herschel who, together with their staffs, have given the required assistance to a struggling institution. In addition to Herschel the names of Maclear, Stone, and Gill will readily occur. A Cambridge senior wrangler was head of one of the public departments for many years when the Cape University was being moulded into shape. In the way of mathematical assistance the Cape has been more fortunate than most colonies; nor have the classics been neglected

as we might infer from the presence of Archdeacon White, a profound scholar, on the Board of Examiners and other lesser lights. Men of talent have often been tempted to the Cape by its magnificent climate, and thus the Cape University may be said to have been fortunate in the founders that accident placed in its way.

No doubt the University sprang very quickly into being, unlike the old centres of learning in Europe, and suffered a little from a certain pretentiousness. This was only what might have been expected, and an able Inspector-General in the person of Mr. Donald Ross pointed out, in a well-known report published by Government in 1883, some of the weak points. Unfortunately the Education Department was very sensitive to any criticism levelled at a high-sounding syllabus, such as they loved to indulge in. It is not always possible for Athena to spring armed in full panoply from the head of Zeus. When in the days of Crown Government Sir John Herschel recommended a single head as the supreme judge and arbiter, he no doubt counselled well; but when the days of responsible government arrived the Education Department became a kind of constitutional anomaly. The ministerial control of it was vested in the person of the Colonial Secretary, but he was generally far too busy to be troubled with details on education.

As it stands the system of education at the Cape which really must now give the lead in South Africa consists of (1) the University, (2) seven colleges at which higher education is given by a body of State-paid professors or lecturers, preparing students for matriculation, the bachelor's, the intermediate, and the master's degrees. Roughly speaking the degrees resemble those at the

London University. There are also degrees for surveyors (no one being allowed to practise surveying without the Cape diploma), degrees for proficiency in law and also in mining. The chief colleges at which this instruction is given are the South African College at Cape Town, the Diocesan College at Rondebosch, the Stellenbosch College, St. Andrew's College at Grahams Town and the Victoria College at Stellenbosch for farming and mining. Two other centres of less importance are the Gray Institute at Port Elizabeth and the Gill College at Somerset East, the last being the result of a magnificent private bequest of £28,000 left by Dr. Gill. There are six hundred and forty-six first-class undenominational public schools, six district boarding schools, five hundred and eighty-five mission schools, four hundred and forty-eight schools giving industrial training to aborigines, twelve special institutions, five hundred and twenty-two private farm-schools, two hundred and thirty-four poor-schools, and thirteen evening-schools.

These were the returns for the year 1898-9, and it may be added that the whole public expenditure was £235,022. The number of students on the roll during the year was 132,020, but those in daily attendance numbered 99,511, rather a striking disparity. It will be noticed that the Government give more than £2 per head for the education of each scholar. The whole population in 1891 was over 1,500,000. These figures indicate pretty clearly what is being attempted, and certainly no one can say that the Cape Government have been indifferent to the wants of the people both white and coloured. The system of education was described by Mr. Donald Ross as mapped out expressly to provide a gradation. From the unit of the system (the

third class undenominational public school) the pupil was to go by regular gradation up to the second and first-class grades, following as far as local circumstances permit the analogy of the German system, which offers a series of degrees of distinction through the schools, and the faculties in the various universities to all who can profit by them. The boy who lives on a farm was to receive a certain amount of education at a third-class school, if possible, and the university programme and especially the matriculation examination was to be almost wholly the guide of the teacher of the first-class school. It may be noted that the Natal system of elementary education does not differ very widely from that of the Cape, and Natalians are naturally eligible for the prizes and degrees of the Cape University.

There is one feature of the South African school-system which is specially important at this time so far as it may help towards the working out of the difficulties in the Transvaal and Orange River colonies, and this is the farm or circuit school. In the mining-centres education can safely be left to take care of itself, the efforts of the Uitlanders of Johannesburg in the old bad Krüger régime being a conclusive proof that the European element desired to provide for its own educational wants, even though a strain was put upon the voluntary principle. The difficulties of education in the future lie with the scattered rural population living in remote villages. Both in Cape Colony and in Natal the governments have already made provision for this peculiar educational want. In the Cape the farm-school has a history, as we have seen, dating as far back as Sir John Herschel's memorandum of 1838, although nothing very practical was done then. Now the Government

aids a farm-school, provided that the house is at least six miles off from the nearest public undenominational school and can bring at least five children to be taught. For each child under a certificated teacher a yearly grant of £2 is given; for each child under an uncertificated teacher a yearly grant of £1; and a yearly sum varying from five to twenty-five shillings for each child who satisfies the inspector or examiner in the standard of elementary instruction, which does not differ greatly from the standards in our own code at home. In Natal similar regulations prevail, and the Government is prepared to pay grants in aid at the rate of £3 for each pupil below Standard VI. and £4 for each pupil in Standard VI. and VII., on these conditions: (1) that the child when examined can show that it has received during the previous twelve months instruction of a kind and degree approved by the inspector; (2) that the farm or homestead where the children reside be not less than five miles from a public school (though this rule can be relaxed if necessary); (3) that no grant in any one family exceeds in the aggregate £30 per annum; (4) that the names, ages, and addresses of the children be sent to the Superintendent of Education at a proper time. When all eyes are being turned towards South Africa as a possible field of emigration it is satisfactory to know that such good provisions for elementary education have been already made in the colonies of Natal (now being extended into the Transvaal) and the Cape. What has been done here will surely be done elsewhere. The lonely veldt may have less drawbacks when centres of English teaching and learning spring up now and then at the fontains and kloofs.

It may be asked what important

conclusions may be derived from this brief survey of the state of education in South Africa? In the first place this historical fact must become absolutely clear that together with effective British occupation has always gone a wise scheme of public and elementary education. Such an improvement, social and otherwise, as naturally follows upon this education (which indeed has been carried far beyond the elementary standards), is in direct contrast to Dutch ideas. The corrupt Pretoria clique cared nothing for the real enlightenment of the back-country Boers; in fact they preferred to keep them in mediæval ignorance in order to use them as credulous instruments of their ambitions. The Pretoria clique reminds us of the old bad days of the Dutch East India Company; and morally they were far more degraded, for at the close of the nineteenth century they should have known better. So far, then, the title-deeds of Great Britain to rule and be the dominant power receive additional strength from her triumphs in the field of education and in the sphere of important

mission-work. Through it all she has dealt most tenderly with Dutch feelings and Dutch prepossessions, and, from the very first moment of occupation, has behaved generously to the Dutch Reformed Church. In the future she will never forget the promptings of a truly liberal creed (using the word *liberal* in its best sense), but she can scarcely be asked to forget entirely how her generosity has been abused. This is the result of an historical retrospect upon which it is not agreeable to dwell. Lastly, a review of the system of education in the older colonies must be useful when we bear in mind the problems that await us. They lie as an example and as a precedent. One great lesson we should learn from what has already passed in South Africa, and it is that public instruction should be given in the English language only, and that English should eventually become the sole official language of our new South African Empire. About this cardinal point our statesmen should be absolutely firm and decided.

WILLIAM GRESWELL.